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LETTERS

FROM

ENGLAND:

BY

DON MANUEL ALVAREZ ESPRIELLA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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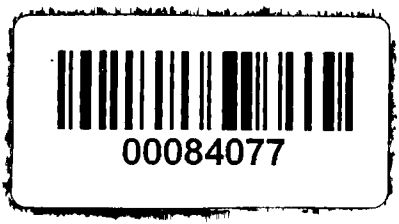

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ESPRIELLA'S
LETTERS FROM ENGLAND.

LETTER LIV.

The Bible.—More mischievous when first translated than it is at present: still hurtful to a few, but beneficial to many.—Opinion that the domestic Use of the Scriptures would not be injurious in Spain.

THE first person who translated the Bible into English was Wickliffe, the father in heresy of John Hus, Jerome of Prague, and the Bohemian rebels, and thus the author of all the troubles in Germany. His bones were, by sentence of the Council of Constance, dug up, and burnt, and the ashes thrown into a river, near Lutterworth, in

the province of Leicestershire. The river has never from that time, it is said, flooded the adjoining meadows: this is capable of a double construction; and accordingly, while the heretics say that the virtue of his relics prevents the mischief, the catholics on the other hand affirm that it is owing to the merit of the execution.

It was translated a second time under Henry VIII. at the commencement of the schism, and most of the translators, for many were engaged, suffered in one place or another by fire. I would not be thought, even by implication, to favour punishments so cruel, which our age, when zeal is less exasperated and better informed, has disused; but that the workmen came to such unhappy end may be admitted as some presumption that the work was not good.* In fact, the trans-

* D. Manuel and his confessor have forgotten that this miserable argument, which the catholics

lation of the scriptures produced at first nothing but mischief. Then was fully exemplified what St Jerome had said so many centuries ago. *Sola scripturarum*

are ready enough to advance when it serves their purpose, is equally applicable to all their own martyrs, and to the Apostles themselves. It may not be amiss to subjoin here the fine account of the death of one of these men, John Rogers, prebend of St Paul's, whose martyrdom is thus alleged as a proof of his having deserved it:

"He might have escaped, and had many motives, as his wife and ten children, his friends in Germany, where he could not want preferment, &c. But being once called to answer in Christ's cause, he would not depart, though to the hazard of his life: from his own house he was removed by Bonner to Newgate amongst the thieves and murderers: he was examined by the Lord Chancellor and the rest of the Councell, and by them was recommitted to prison: he was much pressed to recant; but, stoutly refusing, was first excommunicated and degraded, and then condemned: after which he desired that his wife (to whom he had been married eighteen years, and by whom he

ars est, quam sibi omnes passim judicant. Hanc garrula anus, hanc delirus senex, hanc sophista verbosus, hanc universi præ-

had ten children, and she being a stranger) might be admitted to come to him whilst he lived: but Stephen Gardner, then Lord Chancellor, would by no means suffer it. February the fourth, Anno Christi 1555, he was warned to prepare for death before he rose: 'If it be so,' said he, 'I need not tie my points:' and so he was presently had away to Bonner to be degraded, of whom he earnestly requested to be admitted to speake with his wife, but could not prevail. From thence he was carried into Smithfield; where scarce being permitted to speake to the people, he briefly persuaded them to perseverance in that truth which he had taught them, which also he was now ready to seale with his blood: then was a pardon profered to him, if he would recant, but he utterly refused it: his wife, with nine small children, and the tenth sucking at her breast, came to him; but this sorrowful sight nothing moved him; but in the flames he washed his hands, and with wonderfull patience took his death; all the people exceedingly rejoicing at his constancy, and praising God for it."—*Abel Redivivus.*—TR.

sumunt, lacerant, docent, ante quam discant. There seemed to be no end to the multiplication of heresies, and the divisions and subdivisions of schism. You remember Feyjoo's story of the English house which contained within itself three distinct churches, the whole family consisting of only father, mother, and son. Bellarmine relates one equally curious which he heard from a witness of the fact. The heretical priest was reading in his church, as is customary, a portion of the English Bible, and it happened to be the twenty-fifth chapter of Ecclesiasticus. "All wickedness is but little to the wickedness of a woman. As the climbing up a sandy way is to the feet of the aged, so is a wife full of words to a quiet man.—Of the woman came the beginning of sin, and through her we all die.—Give the water no passage; neither a wicked woman liberty to gad abroad." One of his female auditors sate swelling with anger till she could bear no

more. "Do you call this the word of God?" said she. "I think it is the word of the devil." And she knocked down the Bible and left the church.

But that the free use of a translation should do mischief at first, and more especially in those unhappy times, is no argument against it in the present day. You have asked me what is its effect at present. I reply to the question with diffidence, and you must remember that what I say is the result of enquiry, not of observation.

How little the unthinking and ignorant part of the community understand their Scriptures, and they are the majority of every community, you may judge by this example. The fungus which grows in circular groups, is believed here to start up in the place where a diminutive race of beings dance by night, whom they call Fairies, and who in many things, particularly in their mischievous propensities, seem to resemble our *Duendes*. A cler-

gyman was one day walking with one of his parishioners over his fields, and the man observed as he passed one of these rings, that the fairies were never seen now, as they used to be in old times.—"What do you mean by old times?"—"In the times of the Scriptures."—"Nay," said the priest, "I am sure you never read of them in the Scriptures."—"Yes, I do, and I hear you read of them almost every Sunday at church."—You may conceive the priest's astonishment—"Hear me read of them?" he exclaimed. The man persisted,—"It is no longer ago than last Sunday you read about the Scribes and *Pharisees.*"

There is another class to whom it is pernicious: these are they who having zeal without knowledge think themselves qualified to explain difficult texts, and meddle with the two-edged sword of theological controversy. One man, reading that Christ said, "My Father is greater than I," without further consideration be-

comes an Arian; the phrase "Son of Man" makes another a Socinian; a third extracts Calvinism out of St. Paul.—There is a sect called Jumpers, who run out of their conventicles into the streets and highways, shouting out "Glory! Glory!" and jumping all the while with incessant vehemence till their strength is totally exhausted. If you ask the reason of this frantic devotion, they quote Scripture for it!—When Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary the most Holy, the babe leaped in her womb: the lame man whom Peter and John healed at the gate of the temple, leaped, and praised God: and David danced before the Ark! These fanatics are confined to Wales, where the people are half savages.

Many of the higher classes live, as you may suppose, so entirely without God in the world, that to them it would be of no consequence if the scriptures existed in no other language than the original Greek and Hebrew. But in all ranks of society

there are numbers of persons to whom the perusal of God's own word is an inestimable comfort. No book of devotion would so certainly fix their attention; not only because no other can be regarded with such reverence, but also because none is in itself so interesting. It is a pleasure to them, as well as a consolation; and probably some important maxim, some striking example, nay perhaps even some divine truth, may be thus more deeply imprest upon the heart than it otherwise would be, especially in a land where the priest imparts no domestic instruction,—his functions being confined to the church, and the churchyard. In sickness, in sorrow, and in old age; in resignation under sufferings inflicted; or in thankfulness for blessings vouchsafed, they go to their Bible instead of their beads, with humble hearts and perfect faith; fervently feeling all that they understand, and devoutly believing all that is above their comprehension. These per-

sons are schismatics, because they were born so; if it was not their misfortune, it would not be their crime; and I hope I may be permitted to hope, that in their case the sins of the fathers will not be visited upon the children. He who has threatened this has promised also to show mercy unto thousands in them that love him,—and England has been fruitful of saints and martyrs.

Do I then think, from what the domestic use of the Holy Scriptures produces in England, that it would be beneficial in Spain? Speaking with that diffidence which becomes me, and with perfect submission to the Holy Church, I am of opinion that it would. St Jerome indeed has said, *Melius est aliquid nescire, quam cum periculo discere;* and St Basil has compared the effects of the Scriptures upon weak minds, to that of strong meats upon a sickly stomach. But the days of Julian Hernandez and Cypriano de Valera are happily over; we

have an authorised translation, free from perversion; and were it printed in a cheaper form, I think much of the good which it does in England would be produced, and none of the evil. It might also have the good effect of supplanting some of those books of devotion which savour too much of credulity, and do little service and less honour to religion. But in saying this I speak humbly, and with the most perfect submission to authority.

The English Bible is regarded as one of the most beautiful specimens of the language, which indeed it fixed. The privilege of printing it is restricted to the two universities, and the king's printer, in order, I suppose, to preserve the text correct; yet some impressions once got abroad wherein the negative in the seventh commandment had been omitted, and it was said Thou *shalt* commit adultery. Means have been devised of eluding this exclusive privilege, by printing a commentary with the text;

and in two magnificent Bibles (the price of one was above thirty pieces of eight!) this was so plainly practised as a mere evasion, that the commentary consisted in a single line, in every sheet, printed in the smallest type, and so close to the bottom of the leaf that it must be pared off in binding. These books are truly magnificent, and honourable to the state of arts in the country. But there is a set of booksellers in London, whose main business consists in publishing worthless and catch-penny works for the ignorant in the country, and these have always a great folio family Bible—as they call it—in course of publication, ornamented with pitiful engravings, and published periodically, because most of the deluded people who purchase it could not afford to pay for it in any other manner. The cover of one of these numbers was wrapt round some trifling article which I bought the other day at a stationer's: it professed to render the most diffi-

cult passages clear and familiar, to rectify mistranslations, reconcile the doubtful, fix the wavering, confound the Infidel, establish the peace and happiness of Christian families in this world, and secure their eternal salvation in the next!

LETTER LV.

Curiosity and Credulity of the English.— The Wild Indian Woman.— The large Child. — The wandering Jew. — The Ethiopian Savage. — The Great High German Highter-Flighter.—The Learned Pig.

My morning's walk has supplied me with two instances of English credulity. Passing through St George's fields I saw a sort of tent pitched, at the entrance of which a fellow stood holding a board in his hand, on which was painted in large letters "*The Wild Indian Woman.*" — "What," said I to my companion, "do you catch the savages and show them like wild beasts? This is worse than even the slave-

trade!" "We will go in and see," said he. Accordingly we paid our sixpence each, and, to our no small amusement, found one of the lowest order of the worst kind of women, her face bedaubed with red and yellow, her hair stuck with feathers, drest in cat-skins, and singing some unintelligible gibberish in the true cracked voice of vulgar depravity. A few passers-by, as idle and more ignorant than ourselves, who had in like manner been taken in, were gazing at her in astonishment, and listening open-mouthed to the rogue who told a long story how she came from the wilds of America, where the people are heathen folk and eat one another.—We had not gone a mile further before another showman, with a printed paper on his show-board, invited our attention again—"*To be seen here, the surprising Large Child.*" This was a boy who seemed to be about four years old; and because he was stupid, and could only articulate a few words very imperfectly, his parents swore

he was only of eighteen months—and were showing him for a prodigy.

A few years ago there was a fellow with a long beard in London, who professed himself to be the wandering Jew. He did not adhere to the legend, which was of little consequence, as his visitors were not likely to be better informed than himself,—but laid claim to higher antiquity than the Jerusalem shoemaker, and declared that he had been with Noah in the ark. Noah, he said, had refused to take him in; but he got in secretly, and hid himself among the beasts, which is the reason why his name is not mentioned in the Bible; and while he was there the he-goat had given him a blow on the forehead, the mark of which was visible to this day. Some persons asked him which country he liked best of all that he had visited in his long peregrinations: he answered "Spain," as perhaps a man would have done who had really seen all the world. But it was remarked as rather ex-

traordinary that a Jew should prefer the country of the Inquisition. "God bless you, sir!" replied the ready rogue, shaking his head and smiling at the same time, as if at the error of the observation,—"it was long before Christianity that I was last in Spain, and I shall not go there again till long after it is all over!"

Any thing in England will do for a show. At one of the provincial fairs J. saw a shaved monkey exhibited for a Fairy; and a shaved bear in a check waistcoat and trowsers sitting in an armed chair as an Ethiopian savage. The unnatural position to which the poor animal had been tortured, and the accursed brutality of his keeper, a woman, who sate upon his lap, put her arm round his neck, and called him husband and sweetheart and kissed him, made this, he says, the most hideous and disgusting sight he had ever witnessed. A fellow at one of these fairs once exhibited a large dragon-fly through a magnifying glass, as the Great High German

Highter-Flighter. But the most extraordinary instance of witty impudence and blind curiosity which I have ever heard of, occurred at Cirencester, in the province of Gloucestershire, where a man showed for a penny apiece, the fork which belonged to the knife with which Margaret Nicholson attempted to kill the King.

Nothing is too absurd to be believed by the people in this country. Some time ago there was a woman who went about showing herself for money, with a story that she had been pregnant three years. There was something extraordinary concerning this impostor; for the house in which she lived, which stood upon the shore in the province, or shire as it is called, of Sussex, had no other walls or roof than laths and brown-paper pitched over. It had stood three years without injury, when the person who related this to me saw it. In the last reign * the whole kingdom was

* This circumstance happened in the latter end of the reign of George I.—TR.

astonished by a woman who pretended to breed rabbits, and the king's surgeons were appointed by the state to examine her.—Many persons are living who can remember when the people of London went to see a man get into a quart bottle. This trick was practised for a wager, which some one who knew the world ventured upon its credulity; but as impudent a one was played off by a sharper in the city of Bristol at a later period. He promised to make himself invisible, collected a company of spectators, received their money for admittance, appeared on the stage before them, and saying, "Now, gentlemen and ladies, you see me,"—opened a trap-door and descended, and ran off with his gains.

Any thing that is strange, or that is called strange; a tall man or a short man, a Goitre or an Albino, a white negro or a spotted negro, which may be made at any time with little difficulty and no pain, a great ox or a fat pig, no matter what the wonder be, and no matter how monstrous

or how disgusting, it will attract crowds in England. There was a woman born without arms, who made a good livelihood by writing and cutting paper with her toes. One family support themselves by living in a travelling cart, made in the shape of the vessel wherein the English boil water for their tea, the spout of which is the chimney. The learned pig was in his day a far greater object of admiration to the English nation than ever was Sir Isaac Newton. I met a person once who had lived next door to the lodgings of this erudite swine, and in a house so situated that he could see him at his rehearsals. He told me he never saw the keeper beat him; but that, if he did not perform his lesson well, he used to threaten to take off his red waistcoat,—for the pig was proud of his dress. Perhaps even Solomon himself did not conceive that vanity was so universal a passion.

Yet from this indiscriminate curiosity some general good arises. Natural history

has been considerably improved by the opportunities afforded of examining rare animals, which would not have been brought from remote countries for the mere purposes of science. Posture-masters and stone-eaters have demonstrated strange and anomalous powers in the human body; and the docility of animals, which has thus been practised upon for the sake of immediate gain, may one day be applied to better and more important purposes. Animals have no natural fear of man:—the birds on a desert island are as fearless as they were in Paradise, and suffer him to approach till he knocks them on the head. The power of the Eastern jugglers, who by a song call forth the serpents from their holes, is not more wonderful than that which has been acquired over bees in England. The horse of the Arab is as well domesticated, and as affectionately attached to his master, as the dog of the European. The cattle from one end of Africa to the other are under the most per-

fect obedience to their keeper; a boy will collect a herd of a thousand by his whistle; by this easy language they are made to attack an armed enemy as readily as to come to their milker; and they have thus overthrown soldiers who had conquered the elephants of the East and the cavalry of Europe. When man shall cease to be the tyrant of inferior beings, he may truly become their lord.

LETTER LVI.

Newspapers.—Their Mode of falsifying Intelligence. — Puffs. — Advertisements. — Reviews, and their mischievous Effects.— Magazines.—Novels.

I HAVE adhered strictly to J.'s advice respecting the literature of this country, and allowed myself to read nothing but contemporary publications, and such works as relate to my objects of immediate enquiry, most of which were as little known to him as to myself. He smiles when I bring home a volume of Quaker history, or Swedenborgian theology, and says I am come here to tell him what odd things there are in England. It is therefore only of that contemporary and perishable literature which

affects and shows the character of the nation that I shall speak.

Of this the newspapers form the most important branch. They differ in almost every respect from our diaries, and as much in appearance as in any thing, being printed in four columns upon a large folio sheet. Some are published daily, some twice, some thrice a-week, some only on Sundays. Some come out in the morning, some in the evening; the former are chiefly for London, and one is regularly laid upon the breakfast table, wet from the press. The revenue which they produce is almost incredibly great. At the commencement of the American war the price was twopence. Lord North laid on a tax of a halfpenny, observing, with his characteristic good humour, that nobody would begrudge to pay a halfpenny for the pleasure of abusing the minister. This succeeded so well that another was soon imposed, making the price threepence, which price Mr Pitt has doubled by repeated duties;

yet the number printed is at least four-fold what it was before they were taxed at all.

Of those papers for which there is the greatest sale, from four to five thousand are printed. It is not an exaggerated calculation to suppose that every paper has five readers, and that there are 250,000 people in England who read the news every day and converse upon it. In fact, after the 'How do you do?' and the state of the weather, the news is the next topic in order of conversation, and sometimes it even takes place of cold, heat, rain, or sunshine. You will judge then that the newspapers must be a powerful political engine. The ministry have always the greater number under their direction, in which all their measures are defended, their successes exaggerated, their disasters concealed or palliated, and the most flattering prospects constantly held out to the people. This system was carried to a great length during the late war. If the numbers

of the French who were killed in the ministerial newspapers were summed up, they would be found equal to all the males in the country, capable of bearing arms. Nor were these manufacturers of good news contented with slaying their thousands; in the true style of bombast, they would sometimes assert that a Republican army had been not merely cut to pieces,—but annihilated. On the other hand, the losses of the English in their continental expeditions were as studiously diminished. Truth was indeed always to be got at by those who looked for it; the papers in the opposite interest told all which their opponents concealed, and magnified on their side to gratify their partisans. The English have a marvellous faculty of believing what they wish, and nothing else; for years and years did they believe that France was on the brink of ruin; now the government was to be overthrown for want of gunpowder, now by famine, now by the

state of their finances. The Royalists in La Vendée were a never-failing source of hope. A constant communication was kept up with them from some of the little islands on the coast which are in possession of the English, from whence they were supplied with money and arms; and the Republican commander in the district used to farm out the privilege of going to dine with the English governor, and receiving subsidies from him! Constant disappointment has as little effect upon an English politician as upon an alchemist. *Quod vult, credit; quod non vult, non credit;* he chuses to be deceived, not to be told what he does not wish to hear, and to have all good news magnified, like the Hidalgo, who put on spectacles when he ate cherries to make them seem the finer. A staunch ministerialist believes every thing which his newspaper tells him, and takes his information and his opinions with the utmost confidence from a paragraph-writer, who is paid for falsifying the one and misleading the other.

Cephaleonomancy, or the art of divination by an ass's head, is a species of art magic which still flourishes in England.

Public events, however, form but a small part of the English newspapers, and the miscellaneous contents are truly characteristic of the freedom and the follies of this extraordinary people. In the same paper wherein is to be found a political essay, perhaps of the boldest character and profoundest reasoning, you meet with the annals of the world of fashion; the history of my lord's dinner and my lady's ball; a report that the young earl is about to be married, and that the old countess is leaving town; you have the history of horse-races, cock-fights, and boxing-matches—information that the king has taken a ride, and the princess an airing; a string of puns, and a paragraph of scandal. Then come what are called the puffs; that is to say, advertisements inserted in an unusual shape, so that the reader, who would else have passed them over, is taken by sur-

prise. Thus, for instance, my eye was caught this morning with something about the mines of Potosi, beginning a sentence which ended in the price of lottery tickets. Puff-writing is one of the strange trades in London. A gentleman, who had just published a magnificent work, was called upon one morning by a person whom he had never seen before.—"Sir," said the stranger, "I have taken the liberty of calling on you in consequence of your publication. A most magnificent book indeed, sir!—truly superb!—honourable to the state of arts in the country, and still more so, sir, to you!—But, sir, I perceive that you are not quite well acquainted with the science of advertising.—Gentlemen, sir, like you, have not leisure to study these things. I make it my particular profession, sir. An advertisement ought always to be in a taking form,—always; there should be three different ones to be inserted alternately. Sir, I shall be happy to have the honour of serving you,—nothing is to be

done without hitting the fancy of the public.—My terms, sir, are half-a-guinea for three."

Another professor called upon this same gentleman; and, after he had run through the whole rosary of compliments, opened his business to this effect,—That a work so superb as the one in question must necessarily have its chief sale among people of fashion.—"Now, sir," said he, "I live very much in high life, and have the best opportunities of promoting its success. I have done a good deal in this way for Dr ———. I suppose, sir, you allow centage?"—It proved that he had done a great deal for the doctor, for he had received above a hundred pounds for him, and by way of centage kept the whole.

The advertisements fill a large part of the paper, generally two pages, and it is from these that the main profits both of the revenue and the proprietors arise. The expense of advertising is so great, that to announce a new book in the regular way

amounts to no less a sum than thirty pounds. The greater the sale of a newspaper, the more numerous these become: this renders the paper less amusing, its purchasers fall off; the advertisers then lessen in their turn; and this sort of rising and falling is always going on. A selection of these advertisements would form a curious book, and exhibit much of the state of England. Sometimes a gentleman advertises for a wife, sometimes a lady for a husband. Intrigues are carried on in them, and assignations made between A. B. and C. D. Sometimes a line of cyphers appears. Sometimes Yes, or No,—the single word and nothing more. At this very time a gentleman is offering a thousand pounds to any lady who can serve him in a delicate affair; a lady has answered him, they have had their meeting, she does not suit his purpose, and he renews the offer of his enormous bribe, which in all probability is meant as the price of some enormous villainy.

Poetry also occasionally appears. I have copied from one lately an odd epigram, which plays upon the names of the various papers.

Alas! alas! the *World* is ruined quite!
The *Sun* comes out in the evening
And never gives any light.
Poor *Albion* is no more,
The *Evening Star* does not rise,
And the *True Briton* tells nothing but lies;
Should they suppress the *British Press*
There would be no harm done;
There is no hope that the *Times* will mend,
And it would be no matter
If the *Globe* were at an end.*

Next in importance to the newspapers are the works of periodical criticism, which are here called Reviews. Till of late years there were only two of these, which, though generally in the interest of the Dissenters, affected something like

* The rhymes in this epigram are so defective that the translator supposes it must be inaccurately printed, but he can only copy it as he finds it, not knowing where to recur to the original.—TR.

impartiality. During the late war two others were set up to exercise a sort of inquisition over books which were published, as the publication could not be prevented; to denounce such as were mischievous, and to hold up their authors to public hatred as bad subjects. Such zeal would be truly useful were it directed by that wisdom which cannot err; but it is difficult to say whether the infallible intolerance of these heretics be sometimes more worthy of contempt or of indignation. Of late years it has become impossible to place any reliance upon the opinions given by these journals, because their party spirit now extends to every thing; whatever be the subject of a book, though as remote as possible from all topics of political dissension, it is judged of according to the politics of the author:—for instance, one of these journals has pronounced it to be jacobinical to read Hebrew without points. There are other reasons why there is so little fair criticism.

Many, perhaps the majority, of these literary censors are authors themselves, and as such in no very high estimation with the public. Baboons are said to have an antipathy to men; and these, who are the baboons of literature, have the same sort of hatred to those whose superiority they at once feel and deny. You are not however to suppose that the general character of these journals is that of undeserved severity: they have as many to praise as to blame, and their commendations are dealt upon the same principle—or want of principle—as their censures. England is but a little country; and the communication between all its parts is so rapid, the men of letters are so few, and the circulation of society brings them all so often to London, as the heart of the system, that they are all directly or indirectly known to each other;—a writer is praised because he is a friend, or a friend's friend, or he must be condemned for a similar reason. For the most part the praise of these cri-

tics is milk and water, and their censure sour small-beer.* Sometimes indeed they deal in stronger materials; but then the oil which Flattery lays on is train-oil, and it stinks: and the dirt which Malevolence throws is ordure, and it sticks to her own fingers.

Such journals, even if they were more honourably and more honestly conducted, must from their very nature be productive rather of evil than of good, both to the public and to the persons concerned in them. Many are the readers who do not know, and few are they who will remember, when they are perusing a criticism delivered in the plural language of authority, that it is but the opinion of one man upon the work of another. The public are deceived by this style. This however is a transitory evil: the effect of the praise or censure which they can bestow is necessarily short, and time settles the question

* In the original *aguapie*, which is to generous wine what small-beer is to ale. As this word could not be translated, the equivalent one has been used.—Tr.

when they are forgotten. A more lasting mischief is, that they profess to show the reader that short cut to wisdom and knowledge, which is the sure road to conceit and ignorance. Criticism is to a large class of men what Scandal is to women,—and women not unfrequently bear their part in it;—it is indeed Scandal in masquerade. Upon an opinion picked up from these journals, upon an extract fairly or unfairly quoted,—for the reviewers scruple not at misquotations, at omissions which alter the meaning, or mispunctuations which destroy it—you shall hear a whole company talk as confidently about a book as if they had read it, and censure it as boldly as if they had bestowed as much thought upon the subject as the author himself, and were qualified, as his peers, to sit in judgment upon him. The effect which these journals have produced is,—that as all who read newspapers are politicians, so all who read books are critics.

This species of criticism is injurious to the writer; because, it being understood

that the business of a critic is to pass censure, he assumes a superiority both of information and ability, which it is not likely that he possesses in either; except over such authors as are too insignificant to deserve notice, and whom it is cruel to murder when they are dying. The habit of searching for faults, by the exposure of which he is to manifest this superiority, must inevitably injure such a man's moral character; he will contemplate his own powers with increasing complacency, he will learn to take pleasure in inflicting pain, he will cease to look for instruction, he will cease to reverence genius, he will cease to love truth. Meantime he disguises both from himself and the public his injustice to the living, by affecting for the dead an admiration which it is not possible he can feel; just as the Arian persecutors of old worshipped the saints, while they made martyrs.

Perhaps the greatest evil which this vile custom has occasioned is, that by ma-

king new books one of the most ordinary topics of conversation, it has made people neglect all other literature; so that the public, as they call themselves, deriving no benefit from the wisdom of their forefathers, applaud with wonder discoveries which are pilfered from old authors on whom they suffer the dust to lie lightly, and are deluded by sophisms which have been a hundred times confuted and exposed.

The Magazines are more numerous than the Reviews, and are more interesting, because their use is not so temporary, and men appear in them in their own characters; it is indeed interesting to see the varieties of character which they exhibit. The Monthly and the Gentleman's are the most popular: the latter has been established about seventy years, and has thereby acquired a sort of hereditary rank of which it is not likely soon to be dispossessed. The greater part of this odd journal is filled with antiquarian papers,—and such papers!—One gentleman sends a drawing

of his parish church,—as mean a building perhaps as can be made of stone and mortar, which is drawn in a most miserable manner, and engraved in a way quite worthy of the subject. With this he sends all the monumental inscriptions in the church; this leads to a discussion concerning the families of the persons there mentioned, though they never should have been heard of before out of the limits of their own parish;—who the son married,—whether the daughter died single; and other matter of equal interest and equal importance. If there be a stone in the church with half a dozen Gothic letters legible upon it, and at respectful distances from each other, he fills up the gaps by conjecture: a controversy is sure to follow, which is continued till the opponents grow angry, cavil at each other's style, and begin to call names; when the editor interferes, and requests permission to close the lists against them. The only valuable part is a long list of deaths and

marriages, wherein people look for the names of their acquaintance, and which frequently contains such singular facts of human character and human eccentricity, that a very curious selection might be made from it. The Monthly is more miscellaneous in its contents, and its correspondents aim at higher marks. Some discuss morals and metaphysics, others amuse the world with paradoxes; all sorts of heretical opinions are started here, agricultural hints thrown out, and queries propounded of all kinds, wise and foolish. The best part is a sort of literary and scientific newspaper, to which every body looks with interest. There are many inferior magazines which circulate in a lower sphere, and are seldom seen out of it. The wheat from all these publications should from time to time be winnowed, and the chaff thrown away.

Literature is, like every thing else, a trade in England,—I might almost call it a manufactory. One main article is that

of Novels;—take the word in its English sense, and understand it as extending to four volumes of one continued tale of love. These are manufactured chiefly for women and soldier-officers. To the latter they can do no harm; to the former a great deal. The histories of chivalry were useful, because they carried the imagination into a world of different manners; and many a man imbibed from them Don Quixote's high-mindedness and emulation, without catching his insanity. But these books represent ordinary and contemporary manners, and make love the main business of life, which both sexes at a certain age are sufficiently disposed to believe it. They are doubtless the cause of many rash engagements and unhappy marriages. Nor is this the only way in which they are mischievous: as dram-drinkers have no taste for wine, so they who are accustomed to these stimulating stories, yawn over a book of real value. And there is as much time wasted in talking of them as in read-

ing them. I have heard a party of ladies discuss the conduct of the characters in a new novel, just as if they were real personages of their acquaintance.

The circulating libraries consume these publications. In truth, the main demand for contemporary literature comes from these libraries, or from private societies instituted to supply their place, books being now so inordinately expensive that they are chiefly purchased as furniture by the rich. It is not a mere antithesis to say that they who buy books do not read them, and that they who read them do not buy them. I have heard of one gentleman who gave a bookseller the dimensions of his shelves, to fit up his library; and of another, who, giving orders for the same kind of furniture, just mentioned that he must have Pope, and Shakespere and Milton. "And hark'ye," he added, "if either of those fellows should publish any thing new, be sure to let me have it, for I choose to have all their works."

LETTER LVII.

Account of the Quakers.

THE most remarkable sect in this land of sectaries is unquestionably that of the Quakers. They wear a peculiar dress, which is in fashion such as grave people wore in the time of their founder, and always of some sober colour. They never uncover their heads in salutation, nor in their houses of worship; they have no form of worship, no order of priests, and they reject all the Sacraments. In their meeting-houses they assemble and sit in silence, unless any one should be disposed to speak, in which case they suppose him to be immediately moved by the Spirit; and any person is permitted to speak, women as well as men. These, however,

are only a few of their peculiarities. They call the days of the week and the months according to their numerical order, saying that their common names are relics of idolatry. The English, instead of addressing each other in the second person singular, use the second plural. This idiom the Quakers reject as the language of flattery and falsehood, and adhere to the strict grammatical form. They will not take an oath; and such is the opinion of their moral character, that their affirmation is admitted in courts of justice to have the same force. They will not pay tithes; the priest therefore is obliged to seize their goods for his due. They will not bear arms, neither will they be concerned in any branch of trade or manufactory which is connected with war, nor in any which is so dependent upon accident as to partake of the nature of gaming. They prohibit cards and other games, music, dancing, and the theatre. A drunken Quaker is never seen, nor a criminal one ever brought

to the bar. Their habits of patient and unhazarding industry ensure success; and accordingly they are, in proportion to their numbers, wealthier than any other set of people. They support their own poor, and take the lead in every public charity. What is truly extraordinary is, that though they seem to have advanced to the utmost limits of enthusiasm as well as of heresy, so far from being enthusiastic, they are proverbially deliberate and prudent: so far from being sullen and gloomy, as their prohibitions might induce you to suppose, they are remarkably cheerful: they are universally admitted to be the most respectable sect in England; and though they have a church without a priesthood, and a government without a head, they are perhaps the best organized and most unanimous society that ever existed.

Were it not for their outrageous and insufferably heretical opinions, it might be thought that any government would

gladly encourage so peaceable, so moral, and so industrious a people. On the contrary, though they are at present peculiarly favoured by the English laws, there was a time when they were the objects of especial persecution. I will endeavour briefly to sketch their history;—it contains some interesting facts, and may furnish some important inferences. One of the many remarkable circumstances belonging to this remarkable body is, that though they are now the least literate of all the English sects, they possess more ample collections of their own church history than any other Christian church, or even than any monastic order. If the acts of the Apostles had been as fully and faithfully recorded as the acts of the Quakers, what a world of controversy and confusion would have been prevented.

George Fox, their founder, began his career during the great rebellion. There never was a time in which it could be more excusable to go astray. The here-

tical church of England, by attempting to assimilate itself to the church of Rome, in a few forms, while it pertinaciously differed from it in essentials, and by persecuting those who refused to submit to those forms, had provoked a resistance which ended in its own overthrow. It was an age of ecclesiastical anarchy. Hypocrisy was the reigning vice; the least sincere were the most zealous: discordant doctrines were preached every where, and pious and humble-minded men, puzzled by this confusion of errors, knew not which to chuse. They who in this perplexity stood aloof from any community were so many, that they were distinguished by the name of *Seekers*. George Fox seems to have possessed much of the zeal, the simplicity and tenderness of the seraphic St Francis, (if I may be allowed to compare a heretic with so glorious a saint in his human qualities,)—but, having no better guide to follow than his own nature, no wonder that he was misled. His mind ran upon

religious things when he was but a youth, and he had leisure to think of them in the solitary employment of keeping sheep. At length, unable to bear the burthen of his thoughts, he went to one of the heretical priests and laid open to him the state of his mind. The priest's advice was, that he should take tobacco and sing psalms.

In this uneasy state he abandoned all other pursuits, and wandered about the country in search of truth, which at last, by following wholly the feelings of his own heart, he thought he had attained. During his wanderings he met with many persons of a similar state of uneasiness; and, being thus emboldened, began to fancy himself divinely commissioned to call men to repentance,—a commission which he and his followers soon thought proper to put in execution. Their zeal was not at first accompanied with discretion; they went into the churches and interrupted the preachers;—there needed not this imprudence to provoke men who were already

sufficiently irritated by their doctrines. The priests became their cruel enemies, and often instigated the people to fall upon them. The heretics even in their churches used their Bibles to knock down these enthusiasts with; they were beaten down with clubs, stoned, and trampled upon, and some of them lost their lives.

The Presbyterians during their short tyranny treated them with great rigour, but their greatest sufferings were after the restoration of the monarchy. No sooner had the heretical hierarchy recovered its power, than it began to persecute the dissenters with such bitterness as the rancorous remembrance of its own injuries excited. Charles willingly permitted this, because he dreaded the political opinions of these sectarians; it is probable, too, that as he had been secretly reconciled to the true faith, he was not displeased to see a church which dared not pretend to be infallible, pursuing measures which nothing but infallibility can justify, thus

accustoming the people to intolerance, and weakening heresy: so he protected the Catholics from the false bishops, and left the sectarians to their tender mercy. Other sectarians made use of every artifice to escape; but it was contrary to the principles of the Quakers to avail themselves of any subterfuge; and their dress, language, and manner made it impossible for them to pass unnoticed. The prisons were filled with them; the prisons were then dreadful places; filth, cold, and wet brought on diseases which were aggravated by the uniform brutality of the jailors; and in this manner numbers were destroyed by the cowardly cruelty of those who were ashamed openly to put them to death.

Erroneous as the principles of these people are, it was impossible that any men could lead more blameless lives, and display more admirable integrity or more heroical self-devotement. George Fox was more than once set at liberty on his

bare promise of appearing upon a certain day to take his trial, no other security being thought needful;—more than once opportunities of escaping from prison were avowedly given him, of which he would not avail himself; and a pardon from the king offered him, which he refused to accept, saying, that to accept a pardon, would imply that he had committed a crime which needed it. The usual snare for them was to tender the oath of supremacy, a test enacted against the Catholics. It was in vain that they declared their full assent to the vile heresy of this oath, and that they affirmed its substance in other words; the act of swearing was insisted upon, and for refusing this their property was confiscated, and themselves sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. No injustice, no cruelty, ever provoked them to anger; they exhorted their persecutors, but never reproached them. Instances often occurred of one man's offering to suffer confinement for another.

The principle of selfishness seemed to be extinguished among them. Even the instincts of resentment and self-defence, perhaps the most powerful and deeply-rooted in our nature, they had subdued. Men who had borne arms and approved their courage in battle, not only submitted to insults and blows themselves, but saw their wives and daughters insulted, beaten, and trampled upon, without lifting a hand to protect or revenge them. It was in vain to block up their meeting-houses; they met in the open streets, and in open day, though sure that soldiers would be there to arrest, and a rabble to assault them; and when the parents were cast into prison, the children voluntarily followed their example, held their meetings in the like manner, and submitted to the same sufferings, with the same quiet and unconquerable endurance.

It is worthy of remark, that these excellent people (as assuredly they were in every thing not appertaining to the articles of

their faith), while they were thus persecuted by their brother heretics, were treated by the true church with a tenderness which it has never shown towards any others. Two female preachers who went to Malta to promulgate their opinions, were seized there by the Holy Office and confined, that they might not pervert others; but when it was found impossible to reclaim them, they were set at liberty, and sent out of the island. A man in his way from visiting them landed at Gibraltar, which was then in our possession, and went on Holy Thursday into the church, while the priest was celebrating mass; he took off his cloak and rent it, and appeared in sack-cloth; cried out repentance thrice in a loud voice, and then returned unmolested to his ship. One man went to Jerusalem to bear his testimony against pilgrimages at the Holy Sepulchre! Several went to Rome to convert the pope, for whom they seemed to be particularly concerned;—they were safely lodged in the Holy Office, per-

mitted to write as many memorials as they pleased to his holiness and the cardinals; and when they had said all that they had to say, they were sent out of Italy. With this tenderness did the church behave to them, while in England they were whipt and imprisoned, and in America put to death by the Calvinists.

Even the infidels respected them. A woman left her family in the hope of converting the Grand Turk:—he received her in his camp, gave her audience, listened to her respectfully, and dismissed her with a safe conduct through his dominions. A ship, of which the master and the mate were Quakers, was taken by the Algerines, who put a party of Moors on board to carry her into Algiers. The crew thought themselves strong enough to recover the vessel, and would have attempted to kill the Moors; but these men, true to their principle of not fighting, and not hazarding human life, refused to assist in regaining their liberty, except by such means as

they could conscientiously approve. They contrived to secure their weapons, and took possession of the ship. These people profess also to act up to the Gospel precept of returning good for evil; and in conformity to this the master promised the Moors that they should not be sold as slaves. They put into Majorca, where the islanders to their great astonishment found that the prisoners were not to be sold: they were proceeding to take them by force, but these Quakers actually set the Moors loose from their confinement, that they might assist in working the ship out of port and escaping. The rascally infidels, not in the slightest degree influenced by this example, attempted twice or thrice to become masters again, and it required all the authority and exertions of the Quakers to prevent their men from knocking them on the head. At the imminent risque of being recaptured, they stood over to the Barbary coast, and landed their prisoners in their own country.

King Charles was dining in his palace at Greenwich when the vessel came up, and news was brought him that a Quaker ship was just arrived which they had won from the Algerines without fighting. The king went himself to see it, and when he had heard the story, told the Quakers they were fools for letting the Moors go,—"You should have brought them to me," he said. "I thought it better for them," replied the quaker, "to be in their own country."

One of their tenets is, that man, when truly born again of the Spirit, is restored to the state of Adam before the fall; an error which approximates nearer to truth, than the diabolical heresy of the Calvinists and Gnostics. It might lead to a perilous confidence in those who presumed they had attained to this state; but it must needs produce the best effect upon the feelings and lives of such as are aspiring to it. The doctrine of inspiration is more dangerous, but the tenet which for-

bids all violence prevents those evil consequences which it might else occasion.—The Quakers were always ready to carry a message from the Lord, but they never thought of delivering it upon the point of a dagger. An individual now and then appeared in sackcloth, crying Repentance, in the streets. One man in Ireland went into a Catholic church, naked above the waist, and burning brimstone in a chafing-dish, as a token to the congregation of what they were to expect unless they repented of their errors. Such extravagancies exposed none but themselves to danger.

They lay claim to miracles; and it is good proof of the fidelity of their chronicler that none of these miracles can be considered as impossible, nor even unlikely. George Fox came into a house at a time when they had bound a madwoman, and were attempting to bleed her. He addressed her with his wonted gentleness, quieted her fears, soothed her, persuaded the peo-

ple to unbind her, and converted her to his own opinions. Her phrensy never returned; it had found its proper channel. A few of their numerous persecutors came to untimely ends. One in particular, who had been active in torturing and putting them to death in New England, was thrown from his horse and killed upon the place of their execution: it was natural and perhaps not erroneous to ascribe this to divine vengeance. In the days of their persecution they often denounced a visitation of pestilence against London:—a tremendous plague made its appearance and carried off 100,000 of its inhabitants. As they had announced it, they naturally thought it came upon their account. One Thomas Ibbitt went about the streets of the metropolis denouncing a judgment by fire. On the very next day the fire of London broke out, which consumed thirteen thousand houses. The effect which this produced upon the prophet authenticates the story. So utterly was he astonished at beholding

the accomplishment of his prediction, that his character was totally changed; he immediately conceived himself to be something more than human, advanced to meet the conflagration, holding out both his arms to stay its progress, and would infallibly in this delirium have rushed into the flames, if he had not been carried away by force.

The sufferings of the Quakers ceased upon the accession of James II., who would willingly have purchased toleration for the true faith by granting it to all others. He favoured them also for the sake of one of their great leaders, whose father had been his personal friend. It is related of this king, whom the English themselves acknowledge to have been the best of his family, that when one of this sect was one day addressing him in the palace, with his hat on as usual, the king took off his own; upon which the Quaker observed that the king need not be uncovered on his account. "My friend," re-

plied James, "you don't know the custom of this place;—only one hat at a time must be worn here."

That these people should have borne up against persecution is not wonderful.—There is a stubborn principle in human nature, which in a good cause is virtue, and even in an erroneous one is akin to it. Indeed without persecution, or at least without opposition, the enthusiasm of a sect cannot be kept up,—it is its food and fuel; and without it, it must starve and be extinguished. From the time of their legal recognition the enthusiasm of the Quakers ceased. No prophecies have since been uttered by them in the streets, no testimony borne in sackcloth and ashes; the Grand Turk has been abandoned to his misbelief, and the Pope, notwithstanding their concern for him, given up as irreclaimable. Yet such is the admirable œconomy of this extraordinary sect, that they continue to flourish, if not to spread.

So pure a system of democracy was ne-

ver elsewhere exhibited as that of the internal government of this society. Each parish regulates its own affairs in a monthly meeting, each diocese or district in a quarterly one, the whole body in a yearly one, which is held in the metropolis.—Deputies go from the lesser to the larger assemblies; but every member of the society, who can conveniently, is expected to attend. The women have their meetings in like manner; the equality of the sexes in all things being practically acknowledged. In all other collective bodies the will of the majority is the law. The Quakers admit no such principle: among them nothing is determined upon unless it is the sense of the whole; and as the good of the whole is their only possible motive, (for no member of the society receives any emolument for discharging any office in it,) they never fail, whatever difference of opinion may at first have existed, to become unanimous.

Their preaching strikes a stranger as lu-

dicrous. You may conceive what it must needs be, when the preacher imagines himself to be the organ of inspiration, and, instead of thinking what he shall say, watches for what he believes to be internally dictated to him. Nothing in fact can be more incoherent than their discourses, and their manifest inferiority to those of any other sect ought to convince them of the fallacy of the opinion upon which they proceed. That the admonition of the spirit, in other words the faculty of conscience, when it be wisely and earnestly cultivated, is an infallible guide of conduct, may and must be admitted; but that which will make a good man act well, will not always make him talk wisely. It is not however the matter of these discourses which impresses those who are disposed to be impressed: knowing the speaker to be seriously affected, they partake his feelings, and become seriously affected also. Their history affords a curious illustration of this. The mother of their

chronicler was a Dutchwoman, who being moved, as she believed, by the Spirit, came to preach in England in the days of persecution. She understood no English, and therefore delivered herself through an interpreter. One day it happened that the interpreter was not at hand when the call came upon her, and the person who attempted to translate her meaning found that he could not understand her. The congregation, however, called upon her to proceed, affirming that the religious feeling which she impressed upon them could not be stronger if they had understood her. In the hands of a lying chronicler this would have been magnified into a gift of tongues. The story is not the less valuable, though it may provoke a smile.

The chief cause which exasperated the clergy so greatly against them, was their obstinate refusal to pay tithes, and this is now operating to diminish the sect. Could they be content to pay, and salve their

consciences by protesting against it, all would go on smoothly; instead of this, they suffer their goods to be distrained and sold upon the spot; by which they sustain a loss themselves, and tempt others to profit fraudulently at their expense. The consequence is, that the Quakers have very generally forsaken the country and taken up their abode in cities. This is doubly detrimental to them. Those who remain in the country are left as insulated families, and zeal even more than gaiety requires the stimulus of fellowship. By their laws, any one who marries out of the pale of the society is dismissed from it; but these families who live apart from their fellows are likely to fall off on this account for want of neighbourhood. They who are collected in cities, are lessened by another cause. Their principles exclude them from all professions except that of physic, in which few only can find employment; commerce therefore may be considered as their sole pursuit; their plain and moderate

habits lessen expense, and their industry insures success; they grow rich, and their children desert the society. The children of the rich find its restraints irksome, and are converted—not by strong argument, not by incontrovertible authority, not by any honourable and worthy sense of duty, but by the pleasures of the card-table, the ball-room, and the theatre. But the great agents in converting young Quakers to the established Church of England are the tailors. The whole works of Bellarmine could not produce such an effect upon them as a pattern-book of forbidden cloths and buttons. Nor could any reason be urged to them so forcible as the propriety of appearing like other people, and conforming to the strict orthodoxy of fashion.

Odd as it may seem, this feeling has far more influence among the men than among the women of the society. The women who quit it usually desert for love, for which there is this good reason, that the Quakers have too much neglected the

education of their sons. Women are easily converted in their youth; they make amends for this pliancy as they advance in life, and become the most useful diffusers of their own faith.

The diminution of the sect is not very manifest; and it is kept up by proselytes who silently drop in, for they no longer seek to make converts, and are even slow in admitting them. Perhaps these new members, if they are sufficiently numerous, may imperceptibly bring them nearer to the manners of the world in their appearance, and thus lessen the main cause of their decline.

LETTER LVIII.

Winter Weather.—Snow.—Christmas.—Old Customs gradually disused.

Jan. 2, 1803.

"If you would live in health," says the proverb, "wear the same garment in summer which you wear in winter." It seems as if the English had some such fool's adage, by the little difference there is between their summer and their winter apparel. The men, indeed, when they go abroad put on a great coat, and the women wear muffs, and fur round the neck; but all these are laid aside in the house. I no longer wonder why these people talk so much of the weather; they live in the most inconstant of all climates, against which it is so difficult to take any effectual

precaution, that they have given the matter up in despair, and take no precautions at all. Their great poet, Milton, describes the souls of the condemned as being hurried from fiery into frozen regions: perhaps he took the idea from his own feelings on such a day as this, when, like me, he was scorched on one side and frost-bitten on the other; and, not knowing which of the two torments was the worst, assigned them to the wicked both in turn. "Why do you not warm your rooms like the Germans," I say to them, "and diffuse the heat equally on all sides?" "Oh," the reply, "it is so dismal not to see the fire!" And so for the sake of seeing the fire, they are contented to be half starved and half roasted at the same time, and to have more women and children burnt to death in one year than all the heretics who ever suffered in England in the days when heresy was thought a crime.

I happened to sleep in the country when the first snow fell; and in the morning

when I looked out of window every thing was white, and the snow flakes like feathers floating and falling with as endless and ever-varying motions as the dance of musquitos in a summer evening. And this mockery of life was the only appearance of life; and indeed it seemed as if there could be nothing living in such a world. The trees were clothed like the earth, every bough, branch, and spray; except that side of the bark which had not been exposed to the wind, nothing was to be seen but what was perfectly and dazzingly white; and the evergreens in the garden were bent beneath the load. White mountains in the distance can give no idea of this singular effect. I was equally delighted with the incrustation upon the inside of the windows. Nothing which I have ever seen equals the exquisite beauty of this frost-work. But when I returned to London the scene was widely different.—There the atmosphere is so full of soot from the earth coal, that the snow is sullied as

it falls; men were throwing it from the top of every house by shovels full, lest it should soak through the roof;—and when it began to melt, the streets were more filthy and miserable than I could have conceived possible. In wet weather women wear a clog, which is raised upon an iron ring about two inches from the ground; they clatter along the streets like horses.

The cold in this country is intense; and because it is not quite severe enough to nip off a man's nose if he puts it out of doors, they take no precautions against it, and therefore suffer more than the Germans or Russians. Nay, the Russian soldiers who were in England during the late war died of the cold; they had been accustomed to their stoves and their furs, for which regimentals and English barracks were such bad substitutes, that they sickened and died off like rotten sheep. Liquids freeze in the house. My water-bottle burst last night with a loud report. An exorcist would have taken it for a signal

gun of the enemy, and have discharged a volley of anathemas in return. I was startled, and could not divine the cause till day-light explained it.

I happened to go into a pastrycook's shop one morning, and enquired of the mistress why she kept her window open during this severe weather—which I observed most of the trade did. She told me, that were she to close it, her receipts would be lessened forty or fifty shillings a-day;—so many were the persons who took up buns or biscuits as they passed by and threw their pence in, not allowing themselves time to enter. Was there ever so indefatigable a people!—I may here mention, that the first confectioner who ever carried on the trade in England was a Spaniard, by name Balthezar Sanchez, who founded a hospital near London at the close of the sixteenth century. Some of the English sweetmeats exceed ours: the currant and the raspberry, fruits which flourish in a cold climate, form delicious pre-

serves. Their iced creams also are richer than our iced waters; but these northern people do not understand the management of southern luxuries; they fill their cellars with ice instead of snow, though it is procured with more difficulty and greater expense, and must be broken to the consistency of compressed snow before it can be used.

Just at this time these shops are filled with large plum-cakes, which are crusted over with sugar, and ornamented in every possible way. These are for the festival of the kings, it being part of an Englishman's religion to eat plum-cake on this day, and to have pies at Christmas made of meat and plums. This is the only way in which these festivals are celebrated; and if the children had not an interest in keeping it up, even this would soon be disused. All persons say how differently this season was observed in their fathers' days, and speak of old ceremonies and old festivities as things which are obsolete. The cause

is obvious. In large towns the population is continually shifting; a new settler neither continues the customs of his own province in a place where they would be strange, nor adopts those which he finds, because they are strange to him, and thus all local differences are wearing out. In the country, estates are purchased by new men, by the manufacturing and mercantile aristocracy who have no family customs to keep up, and by planters from the West Indies, and adventurers from the East, who have no feeling connected with times and seasons which they have so long ceased to observe.

Perhaps no kingdom ever experienced so great a change in so short a course of years without some violent state convulsion, as England has done during the present reign. I wish I could procure materials to show the whole contrast:—A metropolis doubled in extent; taxes quintupled; the value of money depreciated as rapidly as if new mines had been discovered; canals cut

from one end of the island to the other; travelling made so expeditious that the internal communication is tenfold what it was; the invention of the steam-engine, almost as great an epocha as the invention of printing; the manufacturing system carried to its utmost point; the spirit of commerce extended to every thing; an empire lost in America, and another gained in the East; these would be parts of the picture. The alteration extends to the minutest things, even to the dress and manners of every rank of society.

LETTER LIX.

Cards.—Whist.—Treatises upon this Game. —Pope Joan.—Cards never used on the Sabbath, and heavily taxed. — Ace of Spades.

THE English cards are, like the French, fifty-two in number. They differ from them in the figured cards, which are whole-length, and in the clumsiness of their fabric, being as large again, thick in proportion, and always plain on the back. Our names for the suits are retained in both countries; and as only with us the names and the figures correspond, and our words for cards (*naypes*) is unlike that in any other European language, we either invented or first received them from the Orientals.

Gambling, dancing, and hunting are as

favourite pastimes among the English as among savages. The latter of the sports must of course be almost exclusively the amusement of men; dancing requires youth, or at least strength and agility; but old and young, hale and infirm, can alike enjoy the stimulus of the dice-box or the card-table.

Fashion, which for a long time appointed the games in this country, as it does every thing else, seems here at last to have lost its fickleness. Ombre, Basset, and Quadrille had their day; but Whist is as much the favourite now as when it was first introduced. Casino came in from Italy, like the opera, and won over many females; but, like the opera, though it became fashionable it never was fairly naturalized, and whist still continues peculiarly the game of the English people. It suits the taciturnity and thoughtfulness of the national character; indeed its name is derived from *whish*, a word, or rather sound, which they make when they would en-

join silence.* Not a word is spoken during the deal, unless one of the party, happening to be of irascible temper, should find fault with his partner—for people of the politest manners sometimes forget their politeness and their manners at cards. The time of dealing, if silence be broken, is employed in discussing the politics of the last deal. Whatever the stake may be, the men usually increase it by betting with some by-stander upon the issue of the rubber, the single game, and sometimes the single deal; and thus the lookers-on take as much interest in the cards as the players themselves.

A certain person of the name of Hoyle wrote a treatise upon the game, about half a century ago, and laid down all its laws. These laws, which, like those of the Medes and the Persians, alter not, are constantly appealed to. Few books in the language, or in any language, have been so fre-

* It seems, by this etymology, as if some person had been fooling the author's curiosity.—Tr.

quently printed, still fewer so intently studied. Compendiums have been made of a pocket-size for the convenience of ready reference; these are very numerous; the most esteemed is by Short.* But though these laws are every where received as canonical, an old Welsh baronet who used to play cards six days in the week, and take physic on the seventh, chose some few years since to set up a heresy of his own in opposition. It consisted in reducing the number of points from ten to six, allowing no honours to be counted, and determining the trump by drawing a card from the other pack, so that the dealer had no advantage, and all chance was as far as possible precluded. Whether this was considered as savouring too much of equality and Jacobinism I know not, but he made few proselytes, and the schism expired with him. He himself called it Rational Whist; his friends, in a word of

* The author has mistaken Bob Short for a real name.—Tr.

contemptuous fabrication, denominated it his *whimsy-whamsy*.

Of the minor games I have only noticed two as remarkable, the one for its name, which is Pope Joan; a curious instance of the mean artifices by which the heretics still contrive to keep up a belief in this exploded fable. They call her the curse of Scotland; so the legend, fabulous as it is, has been still more falsified. The other game is called *a fear*;* each person stakes a certain sum, a card is named, and the pack spread upon the table; each draws one in succession, and he who draws the lot loses and retires: this is repeated till the last survivor remains with the pool. The pleasure of the game consists in the *fear* which each person feels of seeing the fatal card turned up by himself, and hence its name.

Their great poet† speaks of an old age

* *Un espanto* is the original phrase. Not knowing the game, the translator suspects he has not hit upon the right name.—Tr.

† Alexander Pope.

of cards as the regular and natural destiny of his countrywomen,—what they all come to at last. This is one of the effects of their general irreligion. When I have seen a palsied old woman nodding over these Devil's-books, as the puritans call them, I could not but think how much better her withered and trembling hands would be employed in telling a bead-string, than in sorting clubs and spades; and it has given me melancholy thoughts, to think that the human being whom I beheld there with one foot in the grave, had probably never a serious thought upon any other subject. The more rigid dissenters, and especially the Quakers, proscribe cards altogether; some of the old church people, on the contrary, seem to ascribe a sort of sacredness to this method of amusement, and think that a Christmas-day cannot be duly celebrated without it. But a general and unaccountable prejudice prevails against the use of them on Sundays. I believe that half the people of England think it the very essence of sabbath-breaking.

Nothing is taxed more heavily than cards and dice, avowedly for the purpose of discouraging gambling. Yet the lottery is one of the regular Ways and Means of government; and as men will gamble, in some shape or other, it should seem that the wisest thing a government can do, is to encourage that mode of gambling which is most advantageous to itself, and least mischievous to the people. If cards were lightly taxed, so as to be sold as cheaply here as they are in our country, the amusement would, as with us, descend to the lowest class of society, and the consumption be increased in proportion. The revenue would be no loser, and the people would be benefited, inasmuch as some little degree of reflection is necessary to most games; and for those who now never think at all, it would be advancing a step in intellect and civilization, to think at their sports. Besides this, cards are favourable to habits of domestication, and the mechanic would not so often spend his evenings in the chimney corner of the alehouse, if he

could have this amusement by his own fire-side.

All the insignia of taxation are conferred upon the ace of spades, which is girt with the garter, encircled with laurels, and surmounted with the crown, the king's name above, and his motto beneath; but under all, and over all, and around all, you read every where "sixpence, additional duty!" which said sixpences have been laid on so often, that having no room for their increase upon the card, they now ornament the wrapper in which the pack is sold with stamps. Once in a farm-house where cards were so seldom used that a pack lasted half a century, I saw an ace of spades, plain like the other aces: they told me it was always made so in former times; a proof that when it was chosen to bear these badges of burthensome distinction, quadrille, or some one of its family, was the fashionable game.

LETTER LX.

Growth of the Commercial Interest.—Family Pride almost extinct.—Effect of heavy Taxation.—Titles indiscriminately granted.—Increase of the House of Peers.

The commercial system has long been undermining the distinction of ranks in society, and introducing a worse distinction in its stead. Mushrooms are every day starting up from the dunghill of trade, nobody knows how, and family pride is therefore become a common subject of ridicule in England; the theatres make it the object of a safe jest, sure to find applause from the multitude, who are ever desirous of depreciating what they do not

possess; and authors, who are to themselves, as one of their own number says,

"A whole Welsh genealogy alone,"

continue to attack as a prejudice a feeling, which, as philosophers, it is now time for them to defend. That the new gentry of the country should join in this ridicule ought not to be wondered at. He who has no paternal oaks has reason to prefer the poplars of his own planting, and may well like to expatiate upon the inconvenience of an old family house, long galleries, huge halls, and windows which none but the assessor can count, in his own villa, which is built to the pattern of the last tax upon light, and where the stucco upon the walls is hardly dry. But that the true gentlemen of England should so readily yield up their own precedency to vulgar opinion is indeed extraordinary. Nothing, however, is now valued for being old. The windows and the whole front of the mansion must

be modernized; the old avenues of elms, which two centuries have just brought to their full perfection, are sacrificed to a hatred of uniformity; and the yew hedges, which have been clipt year after year till they formed a thick and impenetrable wall, are levelled and shorn smooth away. The fashion of the furniture must be changed; even the old plate must be melted down, and recast in the newest shape; and an English Esquire would as soon walk abroad in his grandfather's wedding suit, as suffer the family Tree to be seen in his hall.

This degeneracy of feeling is confined to the English, and has not yet extended to the Scotch, or Welsh, or Irish. That it is not necessarily and unavoidably produced by commerce seems to be proved by the instances of Genoa and Venice; but the commercial spirit was never so universal in those states as it is in England, where it extends to every thing, and poisons every thing:—literature, arts, religion,

government, are alike tainted; it is a *lues* which has got into the system of the country, and is rotting flesh and bone.

In the celestial hierarchy, we are told, the gradations, though infinite, are imperceptible; so gradual is the ascent, and so beautiful and perfect is order in heaven. Experience shows that something like this is desirable in civil society; at least, where the limits of rank are most strongly marked, there is there the worst tyranny and the most abject misery, as among the casts of Hindostan. Towards this evil the English are tending; the commercial system encroaches on the one hand upon the aristocracy, and on the other it treads down the peasants, and little landholders, the yeomanry as they were called, who were once the strength of England. Half a century ago the country was divided into small farms; here was a race of men above the labourers, though labourers themselves; not superior to their hinds in manners or education, and living at the same table

with them, but still in independence, and with that feeling of independence which was the pride of the country, and which has made the country what it is. These men have disappeared since agriculture has become a trading speculation: field has been joined to field; a moneyed farmer comes, like Aaron's rod, and swallows up all within his reach. Agriculture is certainly materially improved; whether the markets be better supplied or not is disputed; there is less competition, and the rich cultivator can withhold produce which his poorer predecessor must have brought to sale. In this point perhaps the advantages and disadvantages may be equal. But the evil is, that there is one gradation the less in society; that the second step in the ladder is taken away. And this evil is felt and acknowledged: the race of domestic servants were formerly the children of these little farmers; they were decently and religiously educated; and because they were of respectable parentage, they pos-

sessed a sort of family pride which made them respectable themselves. But the labouring and manufacturing poor have no leisure to breed up their children religiously, and no means to do it decently, and a very general depravity of the servants is complained of.

The gentry of small fortune have also disappeared. The colonial war bore hard upon them, but the last has crushed them. Inheriting what to their forefathers had been an ample subsistence, they have found themselves step by step curtailed of the luxuries and at last of the comforts of life, without a possibility of helping themselves. For those who were arrived at manhood it was too late to enter into any profession; and to embark what they possessed in trade was hazarding all, and putting themselves at the mercy of a partner. Meantime year after year the price of every article of necessary consumption has increased with accelerating rapidity: education has become more costly, and at

the same time more indispensable; and taxation year after year falls heavier, while the means of payment become less. In vain does he whose father has lived in opulence, and whom the villagers with hereditary respect still address hat in hand, or bow to as they pass,—in vain does he put down the carriage, dismiss the footman, and block up windows even in the house front. There is no escape. Wine disappears from his side-board; there is no longer a table ready for his friend; the priest is no longer invited after service;—all will not do: his boys must out to sea, or seek their fortune in trade; his girls sink lower, and become dependants on the rich, or maintain themselves by the needle, while he mortgages the land, for immediate subsistence, deeper and deeper as the burthen of the times presses heavier and heavier;—and happy is he if it lasts long enough to keep him from absolute want before he sinks into the grave.

While one part of the community is

thus depressed by the effects of war, and the commercial system, and the diminished value of money, they who are in the lucky scale rise as others sink; and merchants and bankers and contractors make their way by wealth even into the ranks of nobility. James I., whom we compelled to cut off the head of the Raleigh, being perpetually at his shifts to supply the extravagance of his infamous favourites, invented the title of baronet, and offered fifty of these titles for sale at a thousand pounds each,—in those days a weighty sum. This title has never indeed since been publicly put up to sale, yet it is still to be purchased; and as one of the expedients during the American war, it is known that the then minister, having no readier means of rewarding one of his adherents, gave him the blank patent of a baronetcy, to make the most of, and fill up with what name he pleased. It is true that the title confers no power, the holder still continuing a commoner; but when

honorary distinctions are thus disposed of, they cease to be honourable. Knighthood is here bestowed indiscriminately upon the greatest and the meanest occasions: it was conferred upon Sir Sidney Smith, who stopt the progress of Bonaparte in Syria and drove him from Acre; and it is lavished upon every provincial merchant who comes up with an address from his native city to the king upon any subject of public congratulation. This title, which consists in affixing Sir to the proper name (a word equivalent in its common acceptation to *Senor*), differs from the baronetcy in not being hereditary; but, as I have before said, whoever chooses to pay the price may entail it upon his children.

The indiscriminate admission to nobility is a practice which produces the same mischievous effect upon public opinion. They must be short-sighted politicians who do not see that, if they would have nobility respected, they should reserve it as the reward of great and signal services;

that it is monstrous to give the same honours and privileges to a man because he has the command of three, or four boroughs, as to Nelson for the battle of the Nile. This however is not all the evil; the political system of the country is altered by it, and the power of the old nobles gradually transferred to a set of new men, to an aristocracy of wealth. The Lords in England form the second power in the state, and no law can be enacted till it has received their approbation. About a century ago the party in opposition to the crown was known to be the strongest in the house of lords, and the queen, knowing that her measures would else be outvoted, created twelve new peers, who turned the scale. This open and undisguised exertion of the prerogative, to the actual subversion of the constitution as it then stood, provoked nothing more than a sarcasm. When the first of these new peers gave his vote upon the question, one of the old nobles addressed himself to the

rest, and said, "I suppose, gentlemen, you all vote by your foreman," alluding to their number, which was the same as that of a common jury. This practice of granting peerages has been more frequent during the present reign than at any former period, not less than three-fifths of the house of lords having been created, and the number is every year increased. But to the old aristocracy of the country every new creation is a diminution of their power and weight in the political scale. This evil will eventually occasion its own remedy; the lords will become at last too numerous for one assembly, and sooner or later some mode of election for seats must be resorted to for the younger peers, as is now the case in Scotland.

Agur prayed to the Almighty to give him neither poverty nor riches, and the wisest of mankind recorded his prayer for its wisdom. That which is wisdom for an individual must be wisdom for a nation, for wisdom and morality are not variable.

There are too much riches and too much poverty in England; and were there less of the one there would be less of the other. Taxation might be so directed as to break down the great properties, and counteract the law of primogeniture.—Without that law no country can emerge from barbarism, (unless, as in Peru, no right of individual property be acknowledged,) and, in small estates, it seems advisable that it should always hold good; but when a nation has attained to that state of improvement which England has, the operation of the law is mischievous. Society has outgrown it. But thus it is that, retaining institutions after their utility has ceased, man is crippled on his march, by fettering, like the Chinese women, the feet of maturity with the shoes of childhood.

LETTER LXI.

Despard's Conspiracy.—Conduct of the Populace on that Occasion.—War.—The Question examined whether England is in Danger of a Revolution.—Ireland.

A MOST extraordinary conspiracy to kill the king and to overthrow the government has been detected. A certain Colonel Despard and a few soldiers were the only persons concerned. This man had for many years been the object of suspicion, and had at different times been confined as a dangerous person. Whether his designs were always treasonable, or whether he was goaded on by a frantic desire of revenge for what he had suffered, certain it is that he corrupted some of the king's guards to fire at him in his carriage,

from a cannon which always stands by the palace. If it missed, the others were to be ready to dispatch him with their swords. The scheme had spread no further than this handful of associates; and they trusted to the general confusion which it would occasion, and to the temper of the mob. These facts have been proved by the testimony of some of the parties concerned. Despard on his trial steadily denied them, and laid a not unreasonable stress upon the absurdity of the scheme. The jury who pronounced him guilty unaccountably recommended him to mercy; he, however, and some of his accomplices have suffered death. The rest, it is supposed, will be pardoned.* With such lenity are things conducted in England. No arrests have followed, no

* One of these men has just been transported (Dec. 1806), having remained in the Tower since his conviction, upon the allowance of a state prisoner. His expences, it is to be hoped, are charged to the nation among the *Extraordinaries*.—Tr.

alarm has been excited; the people are perfectly satisfied of his guilt, and only say What a blessing that it did not happen under Pitt!—Never had a nation a more perfect confidence in the rectitude of their minister.

The execution was after the ordinary manner, with this difference only, that the criminal after he was dead was beheaded, and the head held up with this proclamation, "This is the head of a traitor." He addressed the people from the scaffold, solemnly protested that he was innocent, and that he died a martyr to the zeal with which he had ever been the friend of their liberties. If revenge were the rooted passion of his soul, never was that passion more strongly exemplified than by this calm declaration of a dying man, which was so well calculated to do mischief,—and had it been under Mr Pitt's administration, a great part of the nation would have believed him. What is most extraordinary is, that the mob applauded him

while he spoke, took off their hats as if in respect when he suffered, and hissed the executioner when he held up his bloody head. They burnt one of the witnesses in effigy,—and attended the body to the grave, as if they had been giving him the honours of a public funeral.

* * * * * *

The English are going to war. To the utter astonishment of every body the king has informed parliament, that formidable armaments are fitting out in the French ports, and that it is necessary to prepare against them. There is not a syllable of truth in this, and every body knows it; but every thing in this country is done by a fiction; the lawyers have as complete a mythology of their own as the old poets, and every trial has as regular a machinery as the Iliad. That war will be the result is not doubted, because it is well known that the ministry are disposed to be at peace. They have given a decisive proof of this by prosecuting M. Peltier for a libel upon

the first consul; it is therefore reasonably supposed, that after a measure so repugnant as this to English feelings, and to English notions of the freedom of the press, has been adopted to gratify the first consul, nothing but necessity could induce them to abandon their pacific system.

This sudden turn of political affairs has greatly raised the reputation of Lord Grenville and his party. It now appears that he prophesied as truly of the peace as Mr Fox did of the war. The curse of Cassandra lay upon both; and it seems as if the English, like the Jews of old, always were to have prophets, and never to believe them. The peace, however, short as its duration has been, has been highly beneficial. The English are no longer a divided people. They are ready and almost eager for the commencement of hostilities, because they are persuaded that war is unavoidable. The tremendous power of France seems rather to provoke than alarm them: volunteers are arming every where;

and though every man shakes his head when he hears the taxes talked of, it is evident that they are ready to part with half they have, if the national exigencies call for it.

Still the circumstances which occurred upon Despard's execution may give the English government matter for serious reflection. There is no longer a party in the country who are desirous of a revolution, and as eager as they were able to disseminate the perilous principles of Jacobinism. Bonaparte has extinguished that spirit; he has destroyed all their partiality for the French government, and Mr Addington has conciliated them to their own. Never was there a time when the English were so decidedly Anti-Gallican, those very persons being the most so who formerly regarded France with the warmest hopes. Whence then can have arisen this disposition in the populace, unless it be from the weight of taxation which affects them in the price of every article of

life,—from a growing suspicion that their interest and the interest of their rulers are not the same, and a disposition to try any change for the chance there is that it may be for the better.

Two causes, and only two, will rouse a peasantry to rebellion; intolerable oppression, or religious zeal either for the right faith or the wrong; no other motive is powerful enough. A manufacturing poor is more easily instigated to revolt. They have no local attachments; the persons to whom they look up for support they regard more with envy than respect, as men who grow rich by their labour; they know enough of what is passing in the political world to think themselves politicians; they feel the whole burthen of taxation, which is not the case with the peasant, because he raises a great part of his own food: they are aware of their own numbers, and the moral feelings which in the peasant are only blunted, are in these men debauched. A manufacturing popu-

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lace is always ripe for rioting,—the direction which this fury may take is accidental; in 1780 it was against the Catholics, in 1790 against the Dissenters. Governments who found their prosperity upon manufactures sleep upon gunpowder.

Do I then think that England is in danger of revolution? If the manufacturing system continues to be extended, increasing as it necessarily does increase the number, the misery, and the depravity of the poor, I believe that revolution inevitably must come, and in its most fearful shape. But there are causes which delay the evil, and some which may by an easy possibility avert it, if government should aid them.

The spread of Methodism in its various shapes tends immediately to make its converts quiet and orderly subjects, though its ultimate consequences cannot be doubted. The army may as yet be depended upon, the volunteers are fully equal to any service which may be required of them,

and the English people, by which denomination I mean, as distinguishing them from the populace, that middle class from whom an estimate of the national character is to be formed, have that wonderful activity and courage, that unless the superiority of numbers against them were more than tenfold, they would put out an insurrection, as they put out a fire. They are a wonderful people. There is no occasion to cry out *Aqui del Rey! (Here for the king!)* in England. Should one man draw his knife upon another in the streets, the passers-by do not shrug up their shoulders and say, "It is *their* business," and pass on, letting murder be committed and the murderer escape. Every man in England feels that it is *his* business both to prevent a crime, and to deliver up a criminal to justice.

The people then are the security of England against the populace; but the tendency of the present system is to lessen the

middle class and to increase the lower ones; and there is also some danger that the people may become dissatisfied with their rulers. There is no œconomy in the administration of public affairs; prodigal governments must be needy, and needy ones must be oppressive. The sum paid in taxation is beyond what any other people ever paid to the state; the expenditure of the state is almost incredible—for the last years of the war it exceeded a million of English money per week. The peculation is in proportion to the expenditure. They are now enquiring into these abuses; many have been pointed out in the department of the admiralty, and no person entertains a doubt but that they exist in every other department in an equal degree. It is almost as dangerous to touch these abuses as to let them continue;—but the alarm has been given, and upon this ground any member of parliament, however little his influence and however de-

spised his talents, would, even if he stood alone, prove a far more formidable opponent to any ministry, than ever Fox has been with all the great families of the country, and all his own mighty powers. Any member who should boldly and pertinaciously cry out that the public money was peculated, bring forward his proofs, and perseveringly insist upon investigation, would not long be without supporters. The people would take up the cause: they can bear to have their money squandered, and can even be made to take a pride in the magnitude of the expenditure, as something magnificent, but they would not bear to have it pilfered;—and should they be convinced that it is pilfered, which these examinations if they be carried on must needs convince them of—should they be provoked so far as to insist upon having all the ways and windings of corruption laid open, and all the accounts well examined before the bills are paid, I know not what lure would be strong

enough to draw them from the scent, and their governors would have reason to apprehend the fate of Actæon.

The causes which may prevent revolution chiefly arise from France. France expects to ruin England by its finances, forgetful with what result that recipe for ruining an enemy has lately been tried by England upon herself. The French do not know this wonderful people. It was supposed that the existence of the English government depended upon the bank, and that the bank would be ruined by an invasion: the thing was tried; men were landed in Wales, away ran the Londoners to the bank to exchange their bills for cash, and the stock of cash was presently exhausted. What was the consequence? Why, when the Londoners found there was no cash to be had, they began to consider whether they could not do without it, mutually agreed to be contented with paper—and with paper they have been contented ever since. The bank is infi-

nitely obliged to France for the experiment, and no persons suffer by it except the poor sailors, who, when they receive their pay, put these bills in their tobacco-boxes, and spoil them with a wet quid.

It is certain that the English government must adopt a strict system of œconomy, thereby effectually preventing revolution by reform, or that sooner or later a national bankruptcy must ensue—and to this France hopes to drive them. But what would be the effect of national bankruptcy?—not a revolution. The English have no fits of insanity: if they saw the evil to be inevitable, they would immediately begin to calculate and to compound, and see how it might be brought about with the least mischief. Thousands would be ruined; but they who would be benefited by the reduction of the taxes would be tens of thousands; so that the majority would be satisfied at the time, and government begin its accounts afresh, strong enough to

take credit, if the people were not disposed to give it. For this fact is apparent from all history,—that the tendency of all political changes is ultimately to strengthen the executive power. Forms may be altered—they who play for authority may win and lose as rapidly as other gamesters, and perhaps at more desperate stakes, but the uniform result is, that the government becomes stronger. The National Convention carried decrees into effect which Louis XIV. would not have dared to attempt—and Bonaparte has all the strength of that convention rendered permanent by military power. Whatever be the external form, the effect is the same; the people submit implicitly to the directions of a single man, till he has riveted the yoke upon their necks; or cheerfully obey the more rigid tyranny of laws, because they conceive them to be of their own making.—A government therefore with the forms of freedom, which could persuade the people

that it had no other object than their good, would be the strongest in the world. The Spartans called themselves free, and boasted of their obedience to institutions which changed the very nature of man.

In the language of modern politics a ministry has been considered as synonymous with government, and government as synonymous with nation. England made this error with regard to France, and France is now making it with regard to England. Admit that the pressure of taxation should occasion a national bankruptcy, and that this in its consequence should bring about a revolution—England would be miserable at home; but would she be less formidable abroad? She would not have a ship nor a sailor the less; and if any circumstances were to awaken a military spirit in the land of the Plantagenets, France, mighty as she is, might tremble for her conquests. I do not believe that the fall of the funds would produce any violent change in the government; and

whether it did or not, the enemies of England would do well to remember, that it would finally strengthen the nation.

Bonaparte, whether at war or at peace, will endeavour to ruin the commerce of England. As for what he can do by war, the English laugh at him. The old saying of the cat and the adulterer holds equally true of the smuggler; and a large portion of the world is out of reach of his armies, but not out of reach of their merchant-ships. He will take the surer method of establishing manufactories at home:—they smile at this too. Manufactories are not to be created by edicts; and if they were, if he could succeed in this, he would do precisely the best possible thing which could be done for England in the best possible way:—first check and then destroy a system, which there is now nothing to check, which cannot be suddenly destroyed without great evil, and which, if it continues to increase, will more effectually tend to ruin England than all the might

and all the machinations of its enemies, were they ten times more formidable than they are.

"That system certainly threatens the internal tranquillity, and undermines the strength of the country. It communicates just knowledge enough to the populace to make them dangerous, and it poisons their morals. The temper of what is called the mob, that is, of this class of people, has been manifested at the death of Despard, and there is no reason to suppose that it is not the same in all other great towns as in London. It will be well for England when her cities shall decrease, and her villages multiply and grow; when there shall be fewer streets and more cottages. The tendency of the present system is to convert the peasantry into poor; her policy should be to reverse this, and to convert the poor into peasantry, to increase them, and to enlighten them; for their numbers are the strength, and their knowledge is the security of states.

Ireland is the vulnerable part of the British empire: and till that empire be restored to the true faith, it will always be vulnerable there. Another conspiracy has just been formed there; the plan was to seize the seat of government, and if the insurgents had not stopped to perpetrate a useless murder upon the way, they would in all likelihood have succeeded; the mails would that night have scattered their proclamations over the whole island, and nine-tenths of the population would have been instantly in rebellion. The exemplary attachment of the Irish to the religion of their fathers is beyond all praise, and almost beyond all example. Nothing but the complete re-establishment of that religion can ever conciliate them to the English government, or reclaim them from their present savage state, and the false hierarchy is too well aware of the consequences ever to consent to this. Dagon knows what would happen if the Ark of Truth were to be set up so near.

LETTER LXII.

Account of Swedenborgianism.

I FOUND my way one Sunday to the New Jerusalem, or Swedenborgian chapel. It is singularly handsome, and its gallery fitted up like boxes at a theatre. Few or none of the congregation belonged to the lower classes, they seemed to be chiefly respectable tradesmen. The service was decorous, and the singing remarkably good: but I have never in any other heretical meeting heard heresy so loudly insisted upon. Christ in his *divine*, or in his *glorified human*, was repeatedly addressed as the only God; and the preacher laboured to show that the profane were those who worshipped three Gods, and that their prayers, instead of a sweet-

smelling savour ascending to the throne of God, were an obscene stink which offended his nostrils.

This is little remarkable in the civil, or, as his disciples would call it, the human and terrestrial part of Emanuel Swedenborg's history. He was born in 1689, at Stockholm, and was son of the bishop of Ostrogothia. Charles XII. favoured him; Queen Ulrica ennobled him, dignifying his name by elongation, as if in the patriarchal fashion, from Swedberg to Swedenborg. It is certain that he was a man of science, having been assessor of the Metallic College, and having published a *Regnum Minerale* in three volumes folio; but he abandoned the mineral kingdom for a spiritual world of his own, the most extraordinary that ever a crazy imagination created.*

* The author seems to have looked for no other account of Swedenborg than what his ignorant believers could furnish. At the age of twenty he pub-

His celestial history is more out of the common. I am copying from the books of his believers when I tell you—that his interiors were opened by the Lord; that he conversed with the dead, and with the very worst devils without danger; that he spoke the angelic language, and respired the an-

lished a collection of Latin poems under the title of *Ludus Heliconius, sive Carmina Miscellanea quæ variis in locis cecinit*, &c. Charles XII. valued him for his scientific knowledge, and profited by it. He took him with him to the siege of Fredericksball; the roads were impassable for artillery, and Swedenborg made a canal, cutting through mountains and raising valleys, by which his battering pieces were conveyed. He was a great favourite with Charles, and deservedly so; for it is said that no person, except Linnæus, ever did so much in so short a time. In all the North of Europe he was held in the highest estimation, till, in the year 1743, he abandoned science to print his waking dreams, and become the founder of a new church.

Swedenborg died at London in 1772, and after lying in state was buried at the Swedish church near Radcliffe Highway.—Tr.

gels' atmosphere; that for twenty-six years he was in the spirit, and at the same time in the body; that he could let his spirit into the body or out of the body at pleasure; that he had been in all the planets, and in all the heavens, and had even descended into hell; that the twelve apostles used to visit him; that a conspiracy of spirits was formed against him; and that he was seized with a deadly disease in consequence of a pestilential smoke which issued from Sodom and Egypt in the spiritual world.

Enough of this. Let me try if it be possible to make his mythology intelligible, and to draw out a map of his extramundane discoveries.

Omnia quæ in cœlis, sunt in terris, terrestri modo; omnia quæ in terris, sunt in cœlis, cœlesti modo. All things which are in heaven are upon earth, after an earthly manner; all things which are upon earth are in heaven, after a heavenly man-

ner.* So says Trismegistos, and who will dispute the authority of the thrice-greatest Hermes?—The Scriptures therefore cannot be understood without the science of correspondences; a knowledge which the patriarchs possessed intuitively in the golden age, which was preserved only scientifically in the silver age, became merely speculative in the copper age, and in our iron generation has been wholly lost. The Egyptian hieroglyphics are to be explained by this key, which opens also all the mysteries of the ritual law. Job was the last writer who possessed it, till it was revealed to the Swedish teacher.

There is nothing new in this, you tell me; it is the old notion of a double meaning, the external and the internal, the literal and the allegorical, the letter and the spirit. Not so, my good Father! "Cor-

* What if Earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on Earth is thought?
MILTON.—TR.

respondence is the appearance of the internal in the external, and its representation therein; there is a correspondence between all things in heaven and all things in man; without correspondence with the spiritual world nothing whatever could exist or subsist." You are growing impatient! —I must give you a specimen of common language interpreted by this science. Two legs stand for the will of God; by a small piece of the ear we are to understand the will of truth; the son of a she-ass denotes rational truth; and an ass, without any mention of his pedigree, signifies the scientific principle—certainly no ill-chosen emblem of such principles and such science as this. This is stark nonsense, you say! My good father Antonio; "No distinct idea can be had of correspondence without a previous knowledge concerning heaven as the Great Man," or *Maximus Homo*, as we must call him, in the Master's own words.

In sober serious explanation, Swedenborg seems to have thought upon one text

and dreamt upon it, till he mistook his dreams and his delirium for revelation. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.—So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." His system is a wild comment upon this passage, as monstrous as any of the Rabinical reveries. Accordingly he lays it down as an axiom, that the whole of divine order was imaged in man at the creation, insomuch that he was divine order itself in a human form, and so Heaven in epitome. Upon this he has built up a creed of the strangest anthropomorphism, teaching that the divinity of the deity constitutes heaven, and that heaven itself is in a human form, Deity and heaven thus identified being the *Maximus Homo*, the Grand or Divine Man.

It has been one of the many fancies of hypothetical philosophers, that all bodies are aggregates of living atoms. Admit this notion, and it explains all the mysterious operations of life with perfect faci-

lity; the little inhabitants of the secretory organs take each what they like best, and thus manufacture all the animal materials. This is analogous to the celestial system of Swedenborg, but with this difference, that each constituent part and particle of his *Maximus Homo* resembles the whole in form, every society in this body corporate, and every individual of each society being in the human shape divine.

Heaven is to be considered under the threefold distinction of general, special, and particular—for Swedenborg had learnt to classify in his earthly studies. Generally it is divided into two kingdoms, celestial and spiritual; but I am sorry to add that, though I have studied the anatomy of the Grand Man with some attention, I cannot discover where or how these regions are separated. The specific division into three heavens is more intelligible; the first is in the extremities, the second or middle in the trunk, the third and highest in the head. The particular division is into the

societies of angels, who form the constituent monads of this divine aggregate.

Every part, however, of the *Maximus Homo* is not Heaven; at least the inhabitants of every part are neither possessed of celestial goodness, nor in that state of celestial enjoyment which seems essential to our ideas of paradise. For instance, the parishioners of the kidneys, the ureters, and the bladder, consist of such persons as in their mortal state took a cruel delight in bringing others to justice; these people speak with a harsh chattering voice, like magpies whose tongues have been slit. They who have despised virtue and religion are in the gall-bladder, a bitter destination no doubt! They also who dwell about the *sphincter vesicæ*, amuse themselves by tormenting the evil spirits. Whether they are purged of this malignant disposition by the secretions and excretions which are going on in their vicinity, this new Emanuel sayeth not. A purgatory indeed there is, and a truly curious one! They who are

still unclean in thoughts and affections are stationed in the colon; not as component parts of the Grand Man—of that honour they are not yet worthy; they are there as his aliment, to be concocted and digested, and after the gross fæces have been cast out, filtered through lacteals and arteries into chyle and blood, till they are taken up into the system and embodied. They who are defiled with earthly dregs are in the small-guts; the most impure of all in the neck of the bladder and in the rectum, both which have below them a most dreadful and filthy hell, ready to receive their contents,

E recolher o mais sobejo e impuro
Da immundicia de toda a obra lançada.*

This Ουρανος, or *Maximus Homo*, seems to be the body of Deity; and the Divine Life or Spirit, like the gifted spirit of

* And to receive the superfluous and impure uncleannesses which are cast out from the whole work.—Tr.

Swedenborg himself, can be in or out, separate from, or identified with it, at pleasure. Accordingly, though the angels are in him, and actually are he, yet they visibly behold him, as the sun of their world. Now the Lord in person being the sun, the light and heat which proceed from him must necessarily partake of divinity; accordingly light in Heaven is divine truth, and heat is divine love: a thin and transparent vapour, which surrounds the angels like an atmosphere, enables them to sustain this influx of Deity. An atmosphere of this kind, which is called the Sphere of Life, exhales from every man, spirit and angel; it is the emanation of the vital affections and thoughts. In Heaven, of course, it is volatile essence of love, and each angel is sensibly affected when he gets within the sphere of another. We on earth feel the same influence, though unconscious of the cause, for this hypothesis physically accounts for the sympathies of dislike and of affection.—The Deity is also

the celestial moon, and this sun and moon are seen at the same time, one before the right eye, and the other before the left. Let an angel turn his face which way he will, this sun is always before him, and he always fronts the east; yet at the same time he can see the other quarters by an inward kind of vision, like that of thought. A precious olla podrida this of allegorical riddles and downright nonsense!

The œconomy of the angels is more rationally imagined, and is better suited to our worldly habits, or suited to better worldly habits than Elysium, or Valhalla, or the Sorgon, the Paradise of Mohammed, or the ever-blessed state of Nireupan to which the Yogue approximates when he has looked at nothing for seven years but the tip of his own nose. You are not to conceive of angels as of disembodied spirits; they are material beings, though of a finer matter. They wear garments white, or flame-coloured, or shining, with which

they are supplied by the Deity; only the angels of the third Heaven, being in the state of innocence made perfect, are naked. They dwell in houses, which are arranged in streets and squares, like our cities on earth; but every thing there is on a nobler scale, and of more magnificence. Swedenborg frequently walked through these cities, and visited the inhabitants; he saw palaces there, the roofs of which glittered as if with pure gold, and the floors as if with precious stones: the gardens are on the south side, where trees with leaves like silver produce fruits resembling gold, and the flowers are so arranged as by their colours to represent rainbows.—There is no space in Heaven, or, more accurately speaking, no such thing as distance: where angels wish to be, there they are; locomotion is accomplished by the mere act of volition; and, what is better still, if one angel earnestly desires the company of another, the wish attracts him, and he immediately appears.

There is a room in the southern quarter of the spiritual world the walls of which shine like gold; and in this room is a table, and on this table lies the Bible, set with jewels. Whenever this book is opened a light of inexpressible brilliancy flows from it, and the jewels send forth rays which arch it over with a rainbow. When an angel of the third Heaven comes and opens it, the ground of this rainbow appears crimson; to one from the second Heaven it is blue; to one of the first or lowest Heaven the light is variegated and veined like marble. But if one approaches who has ever falsified the word, the brightness disappears, and the book itself seems covered with blood, and warns him to depart, lest he suffer for his presumption.

There is public worship in Heaven, which Swedenborg attended, and heard sermons: they have books both written and printed; he was able to read them, but could seldom, he says, pick out any meaning; from which I conclude that he

has successfully copied their style. Writing flows from the thoughts of the angels, or with their thoughts, appearing so coinstantaneously as if thought cast itself upon the paper; but as this writing is not permanent, it seems that pen and ink might usefully be introduced among them. The language of Heaven is like the writing, connate with thought, being indeed nothing more than thinking audibly. Its construction is curiously explained; the vowels express the affections; the consonants the particular ideas derived from the affections, and the words the whole sense of the matter. The angelic alphabet resembles the Chinese, for every letter signifies a complete thing,—which is the reason why the hundred and nineteenth psalm is alphabetically divided;—and every letter, and every flexure and curvature of every letter, contains some secret of wisdom. Different dialects of this language are spoken in the celestial and spiritual kingdoms; the celestials chiefly using the

vowels U and O, the spirituals preferring E and I; the speech of the former resembles a smooth flowing water, that of the latter the sound of a running stream broken on its way. But the most enviable power connected with expression which the angels possess, is, that they represent their ideas in a thin undulating circumfluent fluid or ether, so that they can make thought visible.

In like manner as our human form goes on with us to our heavenly state, so also will our human affections. The ruling passion, whatever it be, not only lasts till death, but continues after death. Woe therefore to those whose whole aspirations are after things that are earthly, for they cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven! This truth is neither the less true, nor the less important, because it is found in the pages of a madman. Marriage also is not dissolved by death:—when one of the wedded couple dies, the spirit of the deceased cohabits with the spirit of the living spouse,

till that also be released; they then meet again, and reunite with a tenderer and more perfect union. On no subject does Swedenborg dilate with more pleasure than upon this. The sphere of conjugal love, he tells us, is that which flows from the Creator into all things; from the Creator it is received by the female, and transferred through her to the male. It makes man more and more man; it is a progressive union of minds, for ever rejuvenescent, continuing to old age and to eternity; it is the foundation and germ of all spiritual and all celestial love; it is in Heaven, and it is Heaven, yea even the inmost Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens. It dwells in the supreme region of the Mind, in the conclave of the Will, amidst the perceptions of Wisdom, in the marriage chamber of the Understanding. Its origin is from the divine nuptials of Goodness and Truth, consequently from the Lord himself. After this it is ridiculous enough to see him trace the progress of this sphere or essence of

love into the soul of man, thence into the mind, thence into the interior affections, from whence it finds its way through the breast into the genital region.

Do not, however, suppose that there are any births in Heaven. All spirits both in Heaven and Hell were born on earth; from which, it seems, a puzzling argument against the system itself might be brought: *Ex nihilo nihil fit*—Of nothing nothing is made; where then was the Grand Man before all the parts of which he is composed were in existence?—Heaven is supplied with children by those who die in infancy; happy are they, for they are given to virgins whose maternal feelings find in them an object, and under their tuition they grow up in the gardens of Paradise. They advance to the full bloom of youth, not beyond it; the old, who arrive in Heaven with all the marks of age, grow younger till they also arrive at the same perfection: to grow old in Heaven is to increase in beauty.

There are many mansions in Heaven, and infinite degrees of happiness, yet is there no envy nor discontent; every one is happy to the utmost measure of his capacity; the joys of a higher state would be no joys to him: his cup is full. But the longer he has been in Heaven, the happier he becomes, his capacity of enjoyment increasing as he is progressive in virtue and goodness, that is, in divine love.

As all Heaven is one Grand Man, or Divinity, so is all Hell one Grand Devil, and the wicked are literally to become members of Satan. The road from one to the other is through the *Maximus Homo's* Port Esquiline; it opens immediately into the mouth of Hell, and the two-and-thirty white millers who sit in the gateway, receive all they have to grind through that channel.* Hell fire is no torment to the

* Das portas para dentro logo entrando,
De grande fábrica hum moinho tinha,
O qual mocndo estava, e preparando
Tudo o que havia de ir para a cozinha;

damned: it imparts no other sensation to them than an irascible heat; for in truth the fire of Hell is nothing more than their evil passions, which appear to good spirits

Moido, e brando dentro assi mandando
O mantimento, que de fóra vinha,
Com esta proporçaõ conveniente
Se repartia, e hia a toda a gente.

Neste moinho junto os dous porteiros,
Estando juntamente em seu officio,
Duros e rijos trinta e dous moleiros,
De grande força, e util exercicio;
Daqui tirados fóra outros primeiros
Foram por grão fraqueza, e vicio;
E os que agora moiam com destreza
Todos branco vestiam por limpeza.

Tinha cada hum delles sua morada
Em dous lanços de penedo, que havia;
Entre elles huma Dona exprimentada,
Esperta andava, e prompta, noite e dia:
E della era approvada ou reprovada
A farinha de quanto se moia,
Provando se era saborosa, e alva,
Porque era ella gentif mestra de salva.

Da Creaçaõ e Composiçaõ do Homen.

in flame and smoke. This is the only light they have, proceeding from themselves, and resembling that which is given out by red-hot coals. The Hell of Swedenborg is what earth would be if all virtue were destroyed, if the salt of the earth were

Immediately upon entering the gates there was a mill of great fabric, which was grinding and preparing all that was to go to the kitchen; sending on, thus ground and softened, the provisions which came from without, to be distributed in convenient proportions to all the people. Near the two porters in this mill, and equally employed in their business, were two-and-thirty sturdy millers, of great strength and useful exercise. Others, who had held this place before them, had been turned out for their weakness; and these, who now ground skilfully, were all clothed in white for cleanliness. Each of these had his dwelling in two pieces of wall, and between them was an experienced dame, who was awake and ready night and day; all the corn which was ground was approved or rejected by her, she trying if it was white and savoury, for she was a gentle housekeeper.—Author's note.

The reader need not be apprised that the situation of these Millers is in the Mouth gate of the town of Mansoul, according to Bunyan's allegory.—TR.

taken away, and its corruptions left to putrefy. There are cities inhabited only by the profligate, where they are abandoned to their own vices, and to the inevitable miseries which those vices produce. They have even their places of public amusement; he saw the dragons holding their abominable diversions in an amphitheatre. Deserts, fields laid waste, and houses and towns in ruins which have been destroyed by fire, fill up the picture.

Of all the heretics who have sprung from the spawn of Luther, Swedenborg is the only one who admits a purgatory.—You will not expect a rational one;—in this intermediate world, as the good are purified from their imperfections, so are the wicked divested of what little goodness they may possess, and thus the one are fitted for Heaven, and the other for Hell. The state of maturity for Heaven is known by the appearance of the regenerate, which is not altogether consistent with our earthly ideas of beauty, for the cuticle appears

like a fine lace-work of bright blue. Here the wicked follow their accustomed vices, till, after they have been repeatedly warned in vain, their cities are shaken with earthquakes, the foundations yawn under them, they sink into the gulf, and there grope their way into their respective Hells.

Hypocrites who still preserved an exterior of piety were permitted to remain in the intermediate world, and make to themselves fixed habitations. This constitutes one of the wildest and absurdest parts of all this strange mythology; for Swedenborg teaches that these residents, by the abuse of correspondences and help of phantasies, built Heavens for themselves, which became at last so many and so extensive, that they intercepted the spiritual light and heat, that is, divine love, in their way from Heaven to Earth. At length this eclipse became total; there was no faith in the Christian church, because there was no charity, and the Last Judgment was then executed; which consisted

in destroying these imaginary Heavens, like the tower of Babel, stripping the hypocrites of their cloak, and casting them into Hell. This consummation took place in the year of our Lord 1757; and there is no other Last Judgment to come, except what every individual will experience for himself singly, after death.

Nothing now remains but to apply the science of correspondences to this scheme of the *Maximus Homo* and the Grand Satan. Spirits act upon men in those parts which correspond to their own anatomical situation: thus impulses and affections of good come from the agency of good angels operating by influx on their corresponding region, whether head or foot, heart, pancreas, or spleen; they, for instance, who inhabit the brain watch over us when we sleep. On the contrary, diseases are the work of the devils; hypocritical devils occasion belly-ache; and spirits who are ripening for Hell, and take delight in putridity, get into our insides and ma-

nufacture for us indigestion, hypochondriasis, and dyspepsy; so that in all cases exorcism must be more applicable than medicine.

One word more:—they who have loved infants with most tenderness are in the province of the neck of the uterus and of the ovaries. By some unaccountable oversight the inference has been overlooked. There is therefore a Grand Woman also! It is not good for man to be alone, not even for the Grand Man. I have found a wife for him! The discovery, for it is a discovery, is at least equal in importance to any in the eight quarto volumes of the Arcana Cœlestia, and entitles me to be ranked with Swedenborg himself; if, indeed, as I modestly beg leave to hint, the honour of having perfected his discoveries and finished his system, be not fairly my due.*

* Their Creed and Paternoster may be added as curiosities.

I believe that Jehovah God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, is one in Essence and in Person, in whom is a Divine Trinity, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and that the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is that God.

I believe that Jehovah God himself came down from Heaven as Divine Truth, which is the Word; and took upon him Human Nature, for the purpose of removing Hell from Man, of restoring the Heavens to Order, and of preparing the way for a New Church upon Earth: and that herein consists the true Nature of Redemption, which was effected solely by the Omnipotence of the Lord's DIVINE HUMANITY.

I believe in the Sanctity of the Word, and that it containeth a threefold Sense, namely, Celestial, Spiritual, and Natural, which are united by Correspondences; and that in each sense it is Divine Truth, accommodated respectively to the Angels of the Three Heavens, and also to Men on Earth.

I believe that evil Actions ought not to be done, because they are of the Devil, and from the Devil.

I believe that good actions ought to be done, because they are of God, and from God; and that they should be done by Man, as of himself; nevertheless under this Acknowledgment and Belief, that they are from the Lord, operating in him and by him.

I believe, that immediately on the Death of the material Body (which will never be reassumed,) Man rises again as to his spiritual or substantial Body, wherein he existeth in a perfect Human Form; and thus that Death is only a Continuation of Life.

I believe that the Last Judgment is accomplished in the Spiritual World, and that the former Heaven and the former Earth, or the Old Church, are passed away, and that all Things are become New.

I believe that now is the Second Advent of the Lord, which is a coming, not in person, but in the Power and Glory of the spiritual Sense of his holy Word, which is Himself. And I believe that the Holy City, New Jerusalem, is now descending from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband.

Their Pater-noster is of more curious complexion.

Father of us, who in the Heavens; let be sanctified the Name of Thee. Let come the Kingdom of Thee. Let be done the Will of Thee, as in Heaven, and upon the Earth. The Bread of us the daily give to us this Day. And remit to us the Debts of us, as and we remit to the Debtors of us. And not bring us into Temptation, but keep us from the Evil. Because of Thee is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory into the Ages. Amen.

This, they say, is perhaps too literal to be used in public worship *as yet*. It will, however, serve to give the English reader an idea of the idiom of that language which the Lord made use of, when he was pleased to teach us how to pray. And it may also, by the arrangement of the words themselves, in some measure point out the order of influx from the Fountain of all Life; for the first word in this divine prayer, viz. *Father*, is the Universal that flows into and fills all the succeeding parts, just as the soul flows into, and fills every part of the human body derived from it.

LETTER LXIII.

Jews in England.

I WENT yesterday evening to the Synagogue. Never did I see a place of worship in which there was so little appearance of devotion. The women were in a gallery by themselves, the men sate below, keeping their hats on, as they would have done in the street. During the service they took from behind their altar, if that word may be thus applied without profanation, certain silver—utensils they cannot be called, as they appeared to be of no possible use,—silver ornaments rather, hung with small rattle bells, and these they jingled as they carried them round the room, then replaced them in the receptacle. This was the only ceremony. It is impos-

sible to describe the strange and uncouth tone in which the priest sung out a portion of the Pentateuch from a long roll. The language was so intolerably harsh, and the manner in which it was chaunted so abominably discordant, that they suited each other to a miracle; and the larynx of the Rabbi seemed to have been made expressly to give both their full effect.

In former times the toleration of the Jews gave occasion to the same disturbances here as in the rest of Europe. They cheated the people, and the people in return took advantage of every tumult to plunder them. The famous King John, who offered to turn Mohammedan if the Miramamolin would assist him against his rebellious subjects, extorted a large sum from a Jew of Bristol by a new and ingenious kind of torture: he condemned him to have a tooth drawn every day till he consented to lend the money; and the Jew parted with six grinders before he submitted. After the schism, as the Heretics

began first to persecute the Catholics, and then one another, the misbelievers were forgotten. Cromwell even favoured them; in one respect he differed from all his contemporary fanatics, for he willingly allowed to other sects the toleration which he claimed for his own. Under his protection Manasses Ben Israel printed three editions of the Bible in Hebrew. This Rabbi is generally supposed to have been a Spaniard, but the Portugueze claim him, and I think we shall not be disposed to contend with them for the honour,—especially as most persons would decide in their favour, without examination.

During the last reign an attempt was made to naturalize them, in a body; and the measure would have been effected had it not been for the indignant outcry of the people, who very properly regarded it as an act of defiance, or at least of opposition, to the express language of prophecy. But this feeling has abated, and were the attempt to be renewed it would meet with

little opposition. In Catholic countries our pictures and crucifixes perpetually set before the Christian's eyes the sufferings of his Redeemer, and there is no possibility of his forgetting the history of his religion. Even the most trifling ceremony is of use. At one of the public schools here, the boys on Easter Sunday rush out of the chapel after prayers, singing

> He is risen, he is risen,
> All the Jews must go to prison.

This custom is certainly very old, though I cannot learn that it was ever usual to imprison this wretched people upon this festival. Some of these boys cut the straps of a Jew's box one day, and all his gingerbread-nuts fell into the street. Complaint was made to the master; and when he questioned the culprits what they could say in their defence, one of them stepped forward and said, "Why, sir, did not they crucify our Lord!" Without admitting the plea in excuse, it may be remarked that

if the boy had not remembered his Easter rhymes, he would have been as indifferent to the crime of the Jews as the rest of his countrymen.

Some years ago one of the best living dramatists wrote a comedy for the purpose of representing the Jewish character in a favourable light. The play was very successful, and the Jews were so well pleased that they presented the author with a handsome gratuity.* A farce was brought forward at another time called the Jew Boy; and the fraternity knowing that it was impossible to represent this class favourably, assembled in great numbers, and actually damned the piece. This single fact is sufficient to prove that the liberty which they enjoy is unbounded. It is not merely the open exercise of their religion which is permitted them, they are even suffered to write and publish against Christianity. If the permission of blasphemy

* This was publicly asserted at the time, but untruly.—TR.

were no sin, there would be little evil in this licence, so little are they able to make proselytes. The only apostate whom they have made within the memory of man is the very person who occasioned the insurrection against the Catholics in 1780, and who afterwards lost his senses, renounced his faith, and, though of noble family, died in a public prison, a lamentable instance of divine vengeance.

In Rome these misbelievers are obliged to hear a sermon once a-week; here a sermon attracts them as a novelty. One of the Methodist itinerants, some few years ago, fancying that, like St Vicente Ferrer, he had a special gift for converting this stiff-necked generation, undertook to confute their errors, and invited them to attend his preaching. The place appointed was the great Methodist Chapel in Tottenham Court Road; and they assembled in such crowds as to fill the chapel and the court in which it is built. One of the windows was taken out, and the orator

taking his stand in the opening, addressed the congregation both within and without at the same time. There can be no reason to suppose that they came with hearts more accessible to conviction than usual; but, had it been the case, the method which this fanatic took was little likely to be successful; for he began by telling them that he was not yet twenty years old, that he had no human learning whatever, and that for all he was about to say to them he trusted to the immediate impulse of the Lord. The rest of his discourse was in character with the beginning, and the Jews returned, the greater number ridiculing his folly, the more thoughtful remembering their own law against him who presumes to speak in the name of the Lord, what the Lord hath not commanded him to speak. Yet from the readiness with which they assembled to hear him, it does not appear impossible, that if some true Christian, inspired with the zeal of our St Vicente, were to collect them together,

their curiosity might be made use of to the triumph of the faith and the salvation of souls.

The English church has no zeal for souls. At the beginning of the last century the daughter of a rich Jew, by name Jacob Mendes de Breta, was at her own instance publicly baptized. The father ran into the church like a madman, charged the officiating clergyman to desist, and, when he perceived that this was in vain, cursed his child with the bitterest imprecations, and prayed to his God that the church might fall in, and crush all who were concerned in the ceremony. After this he utterly disowned her:—the law had made no provision for such cases, and the parish were obliged to support her; which, to their honour, they did in a manner suitable to her former situation in life. At their petition, however, a bill was enacted compelling the Jews to provide decently for their converted children. This much was done upon the emergency of the case, and no-

thing more. Not the slightest effort is made for their conversion, nor the slightest impediment opposed to the public celebration of ceremonies, which the Gospel has expressly abrogated. The Jews have nothing to complain of, except that they pay tithes to the clergy, and that they are liable to the trouble of parish offices—the law even allowing them to be made churchwardens. Any person may be excused from serving this office if he chooses to pay a fine amounting to about ten pieces of eight: it is not long since a parish in London nominated a Jew for the sake of getting this money; he, however, was determined to disappoint them by taking the situation;—the profanation was theirs, not his:—and accordingly the church affairs for the year were actually managed by this son of the Synagogue.

It may well be supposed that when Bonaparte was in Syria his movements were anxiously watched by the Jews. There was a great stir among them, and it is proba-

ble that if he had invited them by proclamation, and promised to give them Palestine, armies would have been raised to take and keep possession of that Holy Land, to which they look, individually and collectively, as their destined gathering place. Individually, I say, because it is taught by many Rabbis, that the children of Israel, wherever buried, can rise again at the coming of the Messiah, nowhere except in the Promised Land; and they, therefore, who are interred in any other part of the world, will have to make their way there through the caverns of the earth; a long and painful journey, the difficulty and fatigue of which are equivalent to purgatory. I know not whether this is believed by the English Rabbis; but that the English Jews attach as devout a reverence to the very soil of Jerusalem as we do to the Holy Sepulchre itself, is certain. One of the wealthiest among them, in late times, made a pilgrimage there; and brought back with him boxes full of the

earth to line his grave. Unhappy people! whose error is the more inveterate because it is mingled with the noblest feelings, and whose obstinate hope and heroic perseverance we must condemn while we admire.

No particular dress is enjoined them by law, nor indeed is any such mark of distinction necessary: they are sufficiently distinguished by a cast of complexion and features, which, with leave of our neighbours,* I will call a Portugueze look.—Some of the lowest order let their beards grow, and wear a sort of black tunic with a girdle; the chief ostensible trade of this class is in old clothes, but they deal also in stolen goods, and not unfrequently in coining. A race of Hebrew lads who infest you in the streets with oranges and red slippers, or tempt school-boys to dip in a bag for

* This is not the only instance in which the author discovers a disposition to sneer at the Portugueze, with the same kind of illiberality in which the English too frequently indulge themselves against the Scotch.—TR.

gingerbread nuts, are the great agents in uttering base silver; when it is worn too bare to circulate any longer they buy it up at a low price, whiten the brass again, and again send it abroad. You meet Jew pedlars every where, travelling with boxes of haberdashery at their backs, cuckoo clocks, sealing-wax, quills, weather-glasses, green spectacles, clumsy figures in plaister of Paris, which you see over the chimney of an alehouse parlour in the country, or miserable prints of the king and queen, the four seasons, the cardinal virtues, the last naval victory, the prodigal son, and such like subjects, even the Nativity and the Crucifixion; but when they meet with a likely chapman, they produce others of the most obscene and mischievous kind. Any thing for money, in contempt of their own law as well as of the law of the country:—the pork-butchers are commonly Jews. All these low classes have a shibboleth of their own, as remarkable as their physiognomy; and

in some parts of the city they are so numerous, that when I strayed into their precincts one day, and saw so many Hebrew inscriptions in the shop windows, and so many long beards in the streets, I began to fancy that I had discovered the ten tribes.

Some few of the wealthiest merchants are of this persuasion; you meet with none among the middle order of tradesmen, except sometimes a silversmith, or watchmaker; ordinary profits do not content them. Hence they are great stock-jobbers, and the business of stock-broking is very much in their hands. One of these Jew brokers was in a coffee-house during the time of the mutiny in the fleet, when tidings arrived that the sailors had seized Admiral Colpoys, and had actually hanged him. The news (which afterwards proved to be false) thunderstruck all present. If it were true, and so it was believed to be, all hopes of accommodation were at an end; the mutineers could only be suppressed by force,

and what force would be able to suppress them? While they were silent in such reflections, the Jew was calculating his own loss from the effect it would produce upon the funds, and he broke the silence by exclaiming, in Hebrew-English, *My Gott! de stokes!* articulated with a deep sigh, and accompanied with a shrug of shoulders, and an elevation of eyebrows, as emphatic as the exclamation.

England has been called the hell of horses, the purgatory of servants, and the paradise of women: it may be added that it is the heaven of the Jews,—alas, they have no other heaven to expect!

LETTER LXIV.

Infidelity.—Its Growth in England, and little Extent.—Pythagoreans.—Thomas Tryon.—Ritson.—Pagans.—A Cock sacrificed.—Thomas Taylor.

FROM Jew to Infidel—an easy transition, after the example of Acosta and Spinosa.

When the barriers of religion had been broken down by the schism, a way was opened for every kind of impiety. Infidelity was suspected to exist at the court of the accursed Elizabeth; it was avowed at her successor's by Lord Herbert of Cherbury; a man unfortunate in this deadly error, but otherwise, for his genius and valour and high feelings of honour, worthy to have lived in a happier age and country. His brother was a religious poet, famous

in his day: had they been Spaniards, the one would have been a hero, the other a saint; but the good seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up with it and choked it. During the great Rebellion, a small party of the leaders were Deists; fanaticism was then the epidemic; they made no attempt to spread their principles, and were swept away at the Restoration, which, after it had destroyed rebellion and fanaticism, struck at the root of liberty and morals. An open profligacy of manners had shewn itself under the reign of the first James; it disappeared during the subsequent struggles, when all the stronger passions and feelings were called into action: but when once the country felt itself settled in peace, this spirit revived, and the court of Charles exhibited a shameless indecency, of which Europe had seen no example since the days of the Roman emperors. Yet, perhaps, the most shocking blasphemy of this blasphemous age is the canonization of

King Charles the Martyr; for such they style him, in mockery, as it might seem, of martyrdom, if we did not know the impudence of adulation. His office, for his festival is regularly celebrated, applies to this heretical king those texts of Scripture which most pointedly allude to the sufferings and death of Christ. A poet of that reign even dared to call him Christ the Second!—It is not true that the prayers to the most Holy Virgin were ever addressed in the churches to Elizabeth, as Ribadaneyra has said: but this impiety, not less shocking, and not less absurd, is continued to this day,—and the breviary which contains it, in the vulgar tongue, is in every person's hands.

From the time of the Revolution, in 1688, the Deists became bolder, and ventured to attack Christianity from the press. They did it, indeed, covertly and with decency. The infidelity of these writers bears no resemblance to the irreligious profligacy of Charles's courtiers, in whom disbelief

was the effect of a vicious heart. It proceeded in these from an erring reason; their books were suppressed as soon as the tendency was discovered, and the authors sometimes punished, so that they did little mischief. Condorcet has mentioned some of them as the great philosophers of England; but the French are ridiculously ignorant of English literature, and the truth is that they have no reputation, nobody ever thinking either of them or their works. Bolingbroke alone is remembered for his political life, so mischievous to his own country and to Europe; his literary fame has died a natural death,—he was equally worthless as a writer and a man.

Voltaire infected this island as he did the continent—of all authors the most mischievous and the most detestable. His predecessors had disbelieved Christianity, but he hated Christ; their writings were addressed to studious men; he wrote for the crowd, for women and boys, addressing himself to their vilest and basest pas-

sions, corrupting their morals that he might destroy their faith. Yet notwithstanding the circulation of his worst works on dirty paper and in worn types by travelling auctioneers and at country fairs; notwithstanding the atheism with which the Scotch universities have spawned since the days of Hume; and notwithstanding the union between infidelity and sedition during the late war, which ruined the democratic party, it is remarkable how trifling an effect has been produced. An attempt was made some twenty years ago to establish a deistical place of worship; it fell to the ground for want of support.—The Theophilanthropists never extended to England. A few clerks and prentices will still repeat the jests of Paine, and the blasphemies of Voltaire; and a few surgeons and physicians will continue in their miserable physics or metaphysics to substitute Nature in the place of God; but this is all. Even these, as they grow older, conform to some of the many modes of worship in the

country, either from conviction, or for interest, or because, whatever they may think of the importance of religion to themselves, they feel that it is indispensable for their families. Judaism can be dangerous nowhere unless where a large proportion of the people are concealed Jews: but that infidelity, unrestrained as it is in this land of error, should be able to produce so little evil, is indeed honourable to the instincts of our nature, and to the truth of a religion, which, mutilated and corrupted as it is, can still maintain its superiority.

Where every man is allowed to have a faith of his own, you will not wonder if the most ludicrous opinions should sometimes be started, if any opinions in so important a matter may be called ludicrous without impiety. The strangest which I have yet heard is that of an extraordinary man who had passed great part of his life in Spain. It was his opinion that there is no God now, but that there would be one by and by; for the organization of the uni-

verse, when it became perfect, would produce a universal Mind or common Sensorium. A sailor, who published the History of his Voyages, expresses his abhorrence of a watery grave, because it would be out of reach of the sun, which else, he thought, would revivify him in the shape of some plant or animal, such perhaps as he might have had a sympathetic affection for while he lived. Pythagoreans in diet have been rather more common than in faith. A certain Thomas Tryon attempted to form a sect of such about a century ago; the disciple who wrote his epitaph says that he almost worked his body up into soul. But, though almost every folly seems to strike root in England as in a congenial soil, this never could be naturalized. The pulse diet of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, would hardly become popular in a country where Beef-eater is a title of honour, where the soldiers march to battle with a song about roast-beef in their mouths, instead of a prayer, and where

the whole nation personify themselves by the name of John the Bull.* This Tryon published a few books in his lifetime: his sect, if he ever formed any, died with him —and he is so nearly forgotten, that, when I heard him spoken of lately, a new book upon the same principle being the topic of conversation, the rest of the company were as ignorant of his existence as myself. The new book which led to this is the work of Ritson, one of the most learned English antiquarians, but of so unhappy a temper, that it is generally believed he is deranged. We should think him possessed, from the evidence of this essay, every page and almost every line of which teems with blasphemy;—it is full of open and avowed hatred of Religion and of Nature, and declarations that if there be a God, he must be a Being who delights in

* *Juan el Toro.* It is needless to comment upon this passage; there may, however, be some readers who do not know that Beef-eater is a corruption of *Buffetier, Buffet* is a cup-board—or sideboard displayed. *Beau-fait.*—TR.

malignity. God have mercy upon this poor wretched man, who seems to find a heavier punishment in the wickedness of his own heart, than earthly laws could inflict upon him!

The principle of abstaining from animal food is not in itself either culpable or ridiculous, if decently discussed. *We* know that in many cases where indulgence is not sinful, abstinence is meritorious. There is therefore nothing irreligious in the opinion, and certainly it is favourable in some of its consequences to morality. But ultimately it resolves itself into the political question, Whether the greater population can be maintained upon animal or vegetable diet? It is to be wished the Pythagoreans in England were numerous and philosophical enough to carry on a series of experiments upon this subject, and upon the physical effects of their system.

We who acknowledge fasting to be a duty at stated times, and an act of devotion at others, and who have the example

of the more rigid monastic orders, shall think these people less absurd than their own countrymen think them, and perhaps less than they really are, as the principles of religion have nothing to do with their speculations. But what will you say when I tell you, that there are also Pagans in the country, actual worshippers of Jupiter and Juno, who believe in Orpheus instead of Christ, Homer and Hesiod instead of the prophets, Plato and Plotinus instead of the apostles? There is a story of an Englishman at Rome who pulled off his hat to a statue of Jupiter, saying, "I beg, sir, if ever you get into power again, you will remember that I paid my respects to you in your adversity." Those whom I now speak of are more serious in their faith. I have heard of one who sacrificed a cock to Esculapius, at midnight, and upon a high place, in the midst of a large city.

The great apostle of the Heathen gods is one Thomas Taylor. He openly avows his belief, saying, in a page prefixed to one of

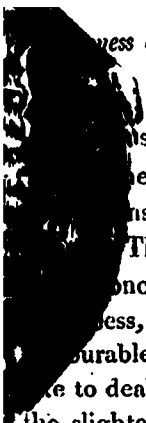
his works, which he dedicates to the Sacred Majesty of Truth,—"Mr Thomas Taylor, the Platonic philosopher, and the modern Plethon, consonant to that philosophy, professes polytheism." For many years he has been labouring indefatigably to propagate this faith by the most unexceptionable means, that of translating the Heathen philosophers, and elucidating their most mysterious parts. His doctrines have made little or no progress, not because they are too nonsensical, for in these cases the more nonsense the better, but because they are too obscure, and require too much attention to be understood, if, indeed, they be not altogether unintelligible. His fame, however, has reached the Continent. Early in the French Revolution the Marquis Valedi came over to visit him: he called at his house, dressed in white like an aspirant; fell at his feet to worship the divine restorer of the Platonic philosophy; rose up to put a bank note of twenty pounds in his hand as an offering, and insisted upon

being permitted to live in the house with him, that he might enjoy every possible opportunity of profiting by his lessons. In vain did the philosopher represent the want of room in his house, his method of living, and inconvenience to himself and to his wife. Nothing would satisfy the man—if there was no other room, he would have a bed put up in the study where they were conversing:—away he went to order it, and was immediately domiciliated.—After some little time it was discovered that he was disposed to worship the wife instead of the husband, and here he divided the Platonism. They parted, however, in friendship. Valedi had left France to escape from a young wife, because, he said, she had no soul: he went back to take a part in the Revolution. Taylor saw him in the diligence as he was setting off; he was in complete regimentals, with a fierce cocked hat,—and his last words were, "I came here Diogenes, and I return Alexander." His fate was like that of many wiser and better men; he perished

by the guillotine, being one of the twenty-two who suffered with Brissot.

Transmigration forms a part of this Pythagorean Platonist's creed. He says of Julian the Apostate, "The greatness of his soul is so visible in his writings, that we may safely believe what he asserted of himself, that he had formerly been Alexander the Great."

LETTER LXV.



...ness of the English to be at war with Spain.

...sing enough to hear these people ...e pride of the Spaniards, when ...iselves are as proud as the Portu... The Dons, as they call us, are, in ...nception, very haughty, jealous ...ess, and terribly revengeful, but ...urable and right rich; therefore they ...e to deal with us in time of peace, and the slightest rumour of war makes every sailor in the service think he is infallibly about to make his fortune. So whenever the government begin by going to war with France, it is calculated upon that war with Spain will follow. They reserve it as a sweetener for the nation; when the peo-

ple begin to be weary of their burthens, and to suspect that no good can come of a contest carrred on without vigour, without system, and in fact without object or means, a declaration against Spain puts them in good humour, the seamen come from their hiding-places, and pirates swarm out from every sea-port.

There is certainly nothing like national enmity between England and Spain, each nation is too honourable not to do justice to the character of the other. They speak of our weakness with a contemptuous pride, which sometimes excites a Spaniard's shame, but more frequently his indignation; but in their sober and settled judgment they avow that it is the interest of England to see us strengthened rather than humiliated, and that their wishes accord with their true policy. They say, and say truly, that Spain and Portugal, united and in health, would form an excellent counterpoise to the power of France; that *our* peninsula seems made by Nature to be a

powerful empire, and that it would be to the advantage of Europe that it should again become so. Yet upon the slightest pretext for quarrelling with us all this would be forgotten; the prospect of plunder would intoxicate the people, the government would do any thing to gratify the sailors, and the buccaneering would begin again. They forget that in proportion as they weaken Spain they derange still more the balance of power: they forget that by cutting off the communication between the two countries, they compel us to use our own manufactures instead of theirs, thus teaching us to become independent of them, and doing for us what we ought to do for ourselves; and they forget also that war forces us to become again a military nation, and disciplines a navy, which only wants discipline to contend once more for the sovereignty of the seas.

After all, if a balance were struck, England would find little reason for triumph. Our gunboats have injured the commerce

of England more than the navy of England can hurt the trade of Spain. A galleon in the course of a seven years' war is but a poor compensation for Gibraltar seven years blockaded, and the straights lined with armed vessels, like a defile, which came out like greyhounds upon every merchant ship, and insulted and endangered their three-deckers.

But never were a people so easily duped. They believe one and all that their last war with us was exceedingly glorious, because, by the cowardice of some of our captains and the insubordination of others, our fleet suffered that unfortunate defeat off Cape St Vincent. They do not remember how we beat their famous Nelson from Teneriffe, where he left a limb behind him as a relic to show that he had been there. They forget their disgraceful repulse at Ferrol, and their still more disgraceful attempt upon Cadiz, when, in spite of the governor's admirable letter, which stated

the situation of the town, and in spite of the destructive consequences of victory to themselves, if they had been victorious, their troops were actually embarked in the boats for the purpose of inflicting the curse of war upon a people then suffering pestilence and famine. England ought to regard it as the happiest event of the war that the commander recalled his orders in time, either for shame or humanity, or more truly under the impulse of a merciful Providence; for had the disease once found way into that fleet, powerful as it was, all discipline would have been at an end; no port could have refused admittance to such an armament, and the pestilence would have been spread from one extremity of the Mediterranean to the other, and to England herself at last.

They wonder that no expedition was sent against our American possessions; not in the least doubting that Mexico and Peru would have fallen into their hands—

as if we had not sent back their Drake and their Raleigh with shame, and as if the age of their Raleighs and Drakes was not over! After the overthrow of Dumouriez and his party in France, Miranda came over to England, hoping to be employed in some such wise project against his native country. As quacks of every kind, political as well as physical, flourish in this island, it is surprising that his tales were not listened to as well as those of the French emigrants; for the ignorance of this nation with respect to the history and present state of our colonies is profound. They do not know that after having destroyed the bloody and execrable idolatry of the American Indians, we imparted to them our arts, our language, and our religion; and that the spiritual conquests of our missionaries were not less rapid, nor less extraordinary, than the victories of Cortes and Pizarro. In the sixteenth century, the language, history, and customs

of Mexico and Peru were elucidated in books printed in the country, and now, in the nineteenth, nothing issues from the press in Jamaica and the other English islands, except a few miserable newspapers; every number of which contains something disgraceful to the English character and to human nature. I have seen some of these precious publications. They abound with notices which show with what propriety these islanders cry out against the cruelty of the Spanish conquerors. Pompey, or Oroonoko, or Quashee, (for these heretics never baptise their slaves!) is advertised as a run-away: he is to be known by the brand of a hot iron upon his breast or forehead, the scars of the whip, and perhaps the mark of his fetters;—and it is sometimes added that he is supposed to be harboured by his wife—harboured by his wife! This phrase alone is sufficient for national infamy.

It amuses me to hear these people talk

of their West Indian possessions. England has as great an idea of her own importance and power, as a one-eyed man has of the magnitude of his nose, when the candle is on his blind side.

LETTER LXVI.

Excursion to Greenwich.—Watermen.—Patent Shot Tower.—Albion Mills.—Essex Marshes.

THE English say that their palaces are like hospitals, and their hospitals like palaces; and the exterior of St James's and of Greenwich justifies the saying. I have seen this magnificent asylum for old seamen, which is so justly the boast of the nation.

As it was my wish to see the whole course of the river through the metropolis, I breakfasted at the west end of the town with W. who had promised to accompany me, and we took boat at Westminster bridge. From no part of the river are so many fine objects to be seen as from this. On one side are the groves and palace of

the Primate at Lambeth; on the other, the residence of the Speaker, which is now repairing in collegiate style; the abbey; and Westminster-Hall, the great court of justice, whose prodigious size and greater antiquity render it an object not less venerable and impressive than the minster. The boats which ply upon the Thames are admirably constructed; long, light, and sharp, they almost fly through the water. They are numbered and registered; the watermen wear a badge, and have a particular costume—any deviation from the ordinary English dress is an improvement;—the fares, like those of the hackney coachmen, are regulated by law, and it is the cheapest as well as the pleasantest mode of conveyance. On Sundays they are forbidden to ply*—one of the stupid and superstitious interdictions this of Calvinism

* A certain number of watermen are permitted to ply on Sundays; they pay an annual acknowledgment on that account to the Watermen's Company! Religion and profit are thus combined!—Tr.

—for Sunday is the very day on which they would find the most employ. They sit idly upon the bench before the alehouse-door by the water-side, cursing the regulation which keeps them idle; and the unlucky person whose way lies along the river must toil through dust and heat, a double distance perhaps, because forsooth no manner of work is to be done upon the sabbath day.

The banks of the river are not made ornamental to the city: a few streets come down to it at right angles, but none are built parallel with the water. The first remarkable object below the bridge is a tower constructed for making shot by a new process; the history of its invention is curious. About five-and-twenty years ago a Mr Watts was engaged in this trade: his wife dreamt that she saw him making shot in a new manner, and related her dream to him: he thought it worth some attention, made the experiment, and obtained a patent for the invention, which he af-

terwards sold for ten thousand pounds. A range of buildings called the Adelphi, which are the handsomest in London, because they are faced with a composition having the appearance of stone,—Somerset House, a magnificent public building, of which the work goes on so slowly, that one half the edifice will in the natural course of decay become a ruin before the other is finished,—and the gardens of the Temple, one of the law-colleges or inns of court as they are called, give some interest to this part of the river: the shores are every where choaked with barges, of which a great number are laden with earth-coal.

A fine sweep of steps ascends from the river to Blackfriars—the second of the three bridges, close by which the common sewers discharge themselves, and blacken the water round about. There is a strong echo under this bridge. On the Southwark side are the ruins of a large building called the Albion Mills, which was erected for the purpose of securing to the metro-

polis a certain supply of flour. A great capital was vested in this useful undertaking; but perhaps in no country are clamours so easily raised by the interested, and so greedily believed by the ignorant, as in England. The very axioms of commercial policy are not understood by people, and it required all the firmness and all the influence of Mr Pitt, during the scarcity, to save the country from the inevitable miseries which a maximum would have occasioned. The millers themselves, best aware of what roguery might be practised in their own trade, spread abroad reports that the flour was adulterated with all sorts of base mixtures. The Albion Mills took fire; whether by accident or not is doubtful: but the mob, who on all such occasions bestir themselves to extinguish a fire with that ready and disinterested activity which characterizes the English, stood by now as willing spectators of the conflagration; and before the engines had ceased to play upon the smo-

king ruins, ballads of rejoicing were printed and sung upon the spot. The fire broke out during the night, a strong breeze was blowing from the east, and the parched corn fell in a black shower above a league distant: even fragments of wood still burning, fell above Westminster-bridge. There is a floating mill upon the river thus constructed: a gun-boat is moored head and stern, with a house built on it, and a wheel on each side which works with the tide.

The passage of the third bridge is considered as an achievement of some little risque: our boat shot through it like an arrow. Close to the bridge are the great water-works by which the city is supplied. When it is considered that all the filth of this prodigious metropolis is emptied into the river, it is perfectly astonishing that any people should consent to drink it. One week's expenses of the late war would have built an aqueduct from the Surry hills, and an hundred fountains to have distri-

buted its stores. The Thames water ferments and purifies itself: in its state of fermentation it is inflammable. St Paul's and the Monument are the main objects in this reach. Below the bridges is the Tower of London, and a forest of shipping: here indeed we saw how truly this city may be called the modern Tyre. Wharfs and warehouses extend in this direction, far beyond any part of the eastern city which I had explored. New docks upon a great scale are nearly completed in a marsh, called the Isle of Dogs, so named, it is said, because the body of a man who had been murdered, and buried there, was discovered by the fidelity of a dog.*

At length we came in sight of green fields and trees. The marshes of Essex, from whence London is so often covered with fogs, were on one side; the Kentish hills, not far distant, on the other; the famous observatory of Greenwich, from whence the

* The king's hounds were kept there when there was a royal palace at Greenwich.—TR.

English calculate their longitude; and the hospital, a truly noble building, worthy of the nation which has erected it, and of the purpose to which it is consecrated. The palace of the Tudors stood here.—Charles II. began to rebuild it, and William appropriated it to its present use. About 2000 disabled seamen are supported here, and boys are educated for the navy. We saw the refectory and the church: but, as in a Relicario, the place excited too much feeling to obtain much attention: we were in the asylum of those sailors, whose skill and courage are unrivalled, a race of men without fear, and as generous as they are brave. What volumes might be compiled from the tales which these old chroniclers could tell! There is not a shore in the habitable world but has been visited by some or other of these men, nor a hardship incident to human nature which some of them have not sustained.

We walked into the Park, and up the hill, where the rabble of London assemble

on Easter Monday, and roll down its green side, men and women promiscuously. From hence we had a noble prospect of the river, the distant shipping, and the pestilential marshes of the opposite coast. A story is told of an old native of these marshes, who carried on a thriving trade in wives. He chose them from the hill-country, and within a few years married and buried eight, all of whom he brought home upon one horse.

LETTER LXVII.

Spanish Gravity the Jest of the English —Sunday Evening described.—Society for the Suppression of Vice.—Want of Holidays.—Bull-Baiting.—Boxing.

One of the great philosophers here has advanced a theory that the nervous and electric fluids are the same, both being condensed light. If this be true, sun-shine is the food of the brain; and it is thus explained why the southern nations are so much more spiritual than the English, and why they in their turn rank higher in the scale of intellect than their northern neighbours.

Spanish gravity is the jest of this people. Whenever they introduce a Spaniard upon the stage, it is to ridicule him for his pride,

his jealousy, and his mustachios. According to their notions, all our women who are not locked up in convents, are locked up at home; guarded by duennas as vigilant as dragons, and husbands, every one of whom is as fierce as the Grand Turk. They believe, also, that a Spaniard thinks it beneath his dignity ever to laugh, except when he is reading Don Quixote; then, indeed, his muscles are permitted to relax.

I am writing upon Sunday evening, at the hour when in our cities the people are at the theatre or the bull-fight; when in every street and village the young are dancing with their castanets, and at every door you hear the viola. What is the scene in England at this time? All public amusements are prohibited by the dæmon of Calvinism; and for private ones,—half the people seriously believe that were they to touch a card on a Sunday, they should immediately find the devil under the table, who is said to have actually appeared upon

such an occasion to an old lady at Bath. The Savoyard, who goes about with his barrel-organ, dares not grind even a psalm-tune upon the sabbath. The old woman who sells apples at the corner of the street has been sent to prison for profanation of the Lord's day, by the Society for the Suppression of Vice; the pastry-cook, indeed, is permitted to keep his shop-window half open, because some of the society themselves are fond of iced creams. Yonder goes a crowd to the Tabernacle, as dismally as if they were going to a funeral; the greater number are women;—enquire for their husbands at the ale-house, and you will find them besotting themselves there, because all amusements are prohibited as well as all labour, and they cannot lie down like dogs, and sleep. Ascend a step higher in society,—the children are yawning, and the parents agree that the clock must be too slow, that they may accelerate supper and bed-time. In the highest ranks, indeed, there is little or no

distinction of days, except that there is neither theatre nor opera for them, and some among them scruple at cards. Attempts have even been made to shut up the public ovens on this day, and convert the sabbath into a fast for the poor. And these are the people who ridicule Spanish gravity, and think they have reformed religion, because they have divested it of all that is cheerful, all that is beautiful, and all that is inviting.

Our peasantry have a never-failing source of amusement in the dance and the viola. Here the poor never dance; indeed, illegal dancing is a punishable crime, and if they do not dance illegally they cannot dance at all. This requires some explanation. Partly from custom, still more from the nature of the climate, there is no dancing here in the open air; the houses of the poor are too small for this diversion; they must therefore meet at some public house where there is a room large enough. The rich do this also; but dancing at a

peso-duro a-head, and dancing at two reales, are very different things—the one is called a ball, the other a sixpenny hop. The rich may take care of their own morals—the police must look after the poor. These public dancing-rooms are excellent preparatory schools for the brothel, and the magistrates very properly endeavour to suppress them,—or should endeavour,—for the recent institution of a society for the suppression of vice, seems to imply that the laws are not executed without such assistance. Here I must remark, that if there be one thing by which the English are peculiarly distinguished from all other people in the world, it is by their passion for exercising authority and enacting laws. When half a score or a dozen men combine for any common purpose, whether to establish an insurance-office, to cut a canal, or even to set spies upon apple-women on a Sunday, they embody themselves into a company, choose out a representative committee and a president, and issue their

resolutions with all the forms of a legislative body. It will be well if the state does not one day feel the inconvenience of this taste for legislation.

Music is as little the amusement of the people as dancing. Never was a nation so unmusical. Perhaps the want of leisure may be the cause. They reproach the Catholic religion with the number of its holidays, never considering how the want of holidays breaks down and brutalizes the labouring class, and that where they occur seldom they are uniformly abused. Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, the only seasons of festival in England, are always devoted by the artificers and the peasantry to riot and intoxication.

You may well conceive of what character the popular amusements needs must be, in a country where there is nothing to soften the manners or ameliorate the condition of the poor. The practice of bull-baiting is not merely permitted, it is even enjoined by the municipal law in some places. At-

tempts have twice been made in the legislature to suppress this barbarous custom: they were baffled and ridiculed, and some of the most distinguished members were absurd enough, and hard-hearted enough, to assert, that if such sports were abolished, there would be an end of the national courage. Would to Heaven that this were true! that English courage had no better foundation than brutal ferocious cruelty! We should no longer be insulted in our ports, and our ships might defy their buccaneering cruisers. Do not suppose that this bull-baiting has any the smallest resemblance to our bull-feasts.—Even these I should agree with the Conde de Norana, and with the Church, in condemning as wicked and inhuman; but there is a splendour in the costume, a gaiety in the spectacle, a skill and a courage displayed in the action, which afford some apology for our countrymen, whereas this English sport is even more cowardly than

the bull-fights of the Portugueze.* The men are exposed to no danger whatever; they fasten the animal to a ring, and the amusement is to see him toss the dogs, and the dogs lacerate his nostrils, till they are weary of torturing him, and then he is led to the slaughter-house to be butchered after their clumsy and cruel method. The bear and the badger are baited with the same barbarity; and if the rabble can get nothing else, they will divert themselves by worrying cats to death.

But the great delight of the English is in boxing, or pugilism, as it is more scientifically denominated. This practice might easily be suppressed; it is against the laws; the magistrates may interfere if they please; and its frequency therefore, under such circumstances, is an irrefragable proof of national barbarity. Cudgel-

* The horns of the bull are tipt in Portugal, to preserve the horse. In Spain, where no such precaution is taken, it is not unusual to see the horse's entrails trailing along the ground.—TR.

playing, quarter-staff, broad-sword, all of which, brutal as such gladiatorial exhibitions are, might have given to the soldiers a serviceable dexterity, have yielded to this more brutal sport, if that may be called sport which sometimes proves fatal. When a match is made between two prize-fighters, the tidings are immediately communicated to the public in the newspapers; and paragraphs occasionally appear, saying the rival are in training, what exercise they take, and what diet, for some of them feed upon raw beef as a preparative.—Meantime, the amateurs and the gamblers choose their party, and the state of the betts appears also in the public newspapers from time to time: not unfrequently the whole is a concerted scheme, that a few rogues may cheat a great many fools.—When the combat at length takes place, as regular a report is prepared for the newspapers as if it were a national victory—the particulars are recorded with a minuteness at once ridiculous and disgraceful; for every move-

ment has its technical or slang name, and the unprecedented science of the successful combatant becomes the theme of general admiration.

Yet, notwithstanding all the attention which these people bestow upon this savage art, for which they have public schools, they are outdone by savages. When one of the English squadrons of discovery was at Tongataboo, several of the natives boxed with the sailors for love, as the phrase is, and in every instance the savage was victorious.

LETTER LXVIII.

The Abbé Barruel.—Journey of two Englishmen to Avignon to join a Society of Prophets.—Extracts from their prophetical Books.

I HAD prepared for you an account of a pseudo-prophet who excited much attention in London here at the beginning of the last war, when, almost by accident, I was made acquainted with some singular circumstances which are in some manner connected with him, and which therefore should previously be told. These circumstances are as authentic as they are extraordinary, and supply a curious fact for the history of the French Revolution.

We were talking one evening of the

Abbé Barruel's proofs of a conspiracy against the governments, religion, and morality of Christendom. A friend of J.'s said, there was about as much truth in it as in one of Madame Scudery's romances; the characters introduced were real persons, to whom false motives and manners were imputed; a little of what was ascribed to them had really occurred, but the whole plot, colouring, and costume of the book, were fictitious. It was a work, said he, written to serve the purposes of a party, with the same spirit and the same intent as those which in old times led to such absurd and monstrous calumnies against the Jews; and, had its intent succeeded, there would have been a political St Bartholomew's day in England. True it was that a society had existed, whose object was to change or to influence the governments of Europe; it was well organized and widely extended, but enthusiasm, not infidelity, was the means which they employed.

In proof of this, he stated the sum of

what I shall relate more at length from the book to which he referred as his authority, and which I obtained from him the next morning. Its title is this,—*A revealed Knowledge of some Things that will speedily be fulfilled in the World, communicated to a Number of Christians brought together at Avignon, by the Power of the Spirit of God from all Nations; now published by his Divine Command, for the Good of all Men, by John Wright his Servant, and one of the Brethren. London, printed in the Year of Christ* 1794. It is one of those innumerable pamphlets, which, being published by inferior booksellers, and circulating among sectarians and fanatics, never rise into the hands of those who are called the public, and escape the notice of all the literary journals. They who peruse them do it with a zeal which may truly be called consuming; they are worn out like a schoolboy's grammar; the form in which they are sent abroad, without covers to pro-

tect them, hastens their destruction, and in a few years they disappear for ever.

John Wright, the author of this narrative, was a working carpenter of Leeds, in Yorkshire; a man of strong devotional feelings, who seems, like the first Quakers, to have hungered and thirsted after religious truth in a land where there was none to impart it. Some travelling Swedenborgian preachers having heated his imagination, he was desirous of removing to London, to find out the New Jerusalem Church. It was no easy thing for a labouring man with a large family to remove to such a distance: however, by working over hours, he saved money enough to effect it. The New Jerusalem Church did not satisfy him; every thing was too definite and formal, too bodily and gross for a mind of his complexion. But it so happened that at this place of worship he entered into talk with a converted Jew, who, when he learnt his state of mind, and that he expected the

restoration of the Jews would shortly be accomplished, said to him, I will tell you of a man who is just like yourself;—his name is William Bryan, and he lives in such a place.

Bryan was a journeyman copper-plate-printer. J.'s friend saw him once at the house of one of the Brotherists; he says that before he saw him he had heard of his resemblance to the pictures of our Lord, but that it was so striking as truly to astonish him. These features, his full clear and gentle eye, the beauty of his complexion, which would have been remarkable even in a girl, and the voice, in which words flowed from him with such unaffected and natural eloquence, as to remind the hearer of the old metaphorical descriptions of oratory, united to produce such an effect upon his believers as you may conceive, considering that they were credulous, and he himself undoubtedly sincere. Wright had now found a man after his own heart. They were both Quietists,

whom, for want of a guide, their own good feelings led astray, and their experiences, he says, operated with each other, as face answers face in a glass.

Bryan told him of a society of prophets at Avignon, assembled there from all parts of the world. This was in the autumn of 1788. In the January of the ensuing year, Wright mistook strong inclination for inspiration, and thought the Spirit directed him to join them. The same spirit very naturally sent him to communicate this to Bryan, whom he found possessed with the same impression. Neither of them had money to leave with their families, or to support themselves upon the journey, and neither of them understood a word of French. Both were determined to go—Bryan that night, Wright the following morning—such being their implicit obedience to the impulse within them, that the one would not wait, nor the other hasten. Before his departure Bryan called upon a friend, who said to him, "William, I have

had it in my mind to ask if thou wert not sometimes in want of money?" He acknowledged that it was this want which now brought him there; and the friend gave him four guineas. If this same friend was the person who first told him of the society at Avignon, as may reasonably be suspected, the whole collusion will be clear. One guinea he left with his wife, who was at that time in child-bed, gave half-a-guinea to Wright to carry him to Dover, and set off.

Bryan's wife, not being in a state of belief, was greatly offended with Wright, thinking that if it had not been for him her husband would not have left her. His own wife was in a happier temper of mind, and encouraged him to go. She had a son by a former husband who was some little support to her, and who acquiesced in the necessity of this journey. He seems indeed to have communicated something of his own fervour to all about him. A young man with whom he was intimate, bought

him several things for his journey, and gave him a guinea; this same person befriended his family during his absence. At three in the morning he rose to depart: his son-in-law prepared breakfast, and they made the watchman who had called him partake of it, for it was severely cold. "I then," says Wright, "turned to my children, who were all fast asleep, and kissed them, and interceded with the great and merciful God, relating to him their situation, in which, for his sake, they were going to be left without any outward dependence;—and at that time some of them were lying on a bed of shavings that I used to bring from my shop; at the same time imploring him that he would be pleased to bless them, and if one friend failed, another might be raised up, as I did not know whether I ever should see them any more; for, although our first journey was to Avignon, we did not know it would end there."

He then went to Bryan's wife, whom his own was nursing in child-bed. The

poor woman's resentment had now given way, the quiet self-devotion of her husband and his friend had almost persuaded her to believe also; she burst into tears when she saw him, and saluted him, as he says, in the fear and love of God, in which she bade him remember her to her husband. Wright then went to the coach. Soon after they left London it began to rain and snow, and he was on the outside. He was of a sickly habit, always liable to take cold, and had at this time a bad cough. A doubt came upon him, that if the Lord had sent him he would certainly have caused it to be fine weather. Besides this, he began to fear that Bryan would already have crost the channel, in which case, when he got to Dover, he should have no money to pay his passage. Was it not better therefore to turn back? But the testimony of God's power in his heart, he says, was greater than all these thoughts.

The wind had been contrary, and detain-

ed Bryan. They crossed over to Calais, took some food at an inn there, and got their money changed, enquired the names of bread, wine, and sleeping, in the language of the country, and which way they were to go, and then set off on their journey. They travelled on foot to Paris. Wright's feet were sorely blistered; but there was no stopping, for his "mind was bound in the spirit to travel on." They carried their burthen by turns when both were able, but it generally fell upon Bryan as the stronger man. Change of climate, however, aided probably by the faith which was in him, removed Wright's cough. Their funds just lasted to Paris; here Bryan had an acquaintance, to whose house they went. This man had received a letter to say who were coming, and that they were bad men, Wright in particular, whom it advised him to send back. As you may suppose, he was soon fully satisfied with them—he entertained them three days, and then dismissed them, giving them five *louis d'ors*

to bear them on. The whole journal of their way is interesting: it relates instances of that subsiding of overwrought feelings which bodily exhaustion produces, and which enthusiasts call desertion; of natural thoughts and fears recurring, remembrances of home, and depression which sometimes occasioned self-suspicion and half-repentance:—with these symptoms the church is well acquainted, as common to the deluded, and to those who are in truth under the influence of divine inspiration, and they prove the sincerity of this narrative.

At length they came in sight of Avignon. They washed some linen in the river, sat down under the bushes till it was dry, then put it on; and, having thus made their appearance as decent as they could, proceeded to the house of the prophets, to which, as it appears, they had brought with them a sufficient direction. The door was opened by one of the brethren, and by a person who could speak

English, and who had arrived there a day or two before from another part of the world. After they had washed and shaved, they were taken across the street to another house, and shown into a large room, where there was a table spread, nearly the whole length; they were told that table was provided by the Lord, and when they wanted any thing to eat or to drink they were to go there, and they would find a servant ready to wait upon them. The brethren also provided them with clothes and whatever else they needed, and with money to give to the poor, saying they had orders from the Lord to do so. In a short time their Paris friend arrived, and was admitted a member of the society before them, that he might be their interpreter. I wish the form of initiation had been given. They met every evening to commemorate the death of our Lord by eating bread and drinking wine. Very often, says Wright, when we have been sitting together, the furniture in the room has been shaken as

though it were all coming to pieces; and upon enquiring what was the cause, we were told that it announced the presence of angels; and when these were not heard, the brethren were always afraid that something was amiss, and so enquired at the Word of the Lord.

You will easily suppose that they had orders to keep the society secret till the appointed time. I much wish that the book had stated how their answers from the Lord were received, but on this it is silent. The drift and charter of the society are, however, sufficiently manifested by the Extracts which Wright has published from their Journals, and of which I here subjoin enough to satisfy you:

"You will soon see the pride of the Mahometan in the field; several sovereigns will unite to lay it low. It is then that the great light will appear. These perfidious enemies of the name of God will keep themselves up for a time in their obstinacy, and in the mean time will grow up he who shall

destroy them. Before the end of this year they will begin to show their fierceness, and you will hear of extraordinary things and memorable feats. You will hear that the world is filled with trouble and dissension; father, son, relations, friends, all will be in motion; and it is in this year (1789) that all will have its beginning.

"Remember that the face of the world will be changed, and you shall see it restored to its first state. The thrones shall be overturned, the earth shall be furrowed and change its aspect. They who shall be alive at that time will envy the fate of the dead.

"The world will very soon be filled with trouble. Every where people will experience misfortunes. I announce it to you before-hand. The shepherd will forsake his flock; the sheep will be dispersed. He will oppress another land, and the nations will rise up in arms.

"You will learn very soon that a part of the world is in confusion; that the chiefs of nations are armed one against another. The earth will be overflowed with blood. You will hear of the death of several sovereigns; they give themselves up to luxury, they live in pleasures, but at last one of them will fall and make an unhappy end.

"All the events of this century have been fore-

seen, and no century has been distinguished by so many prodigies, but the ensuing will be filled with much greater still.

"The fire is kindled, the moment is come, the Mahometan is going to fall. Asia and Africa are staggering; fear pursues them, and they have a glimpse of the fate that awaits them.

"The cross of Jesus Christ shall be set up and triumph in those vast countries where it has been so long despised. Then Palestine will become again the most fortunate country on the earth; it shall be the centre of that faith of which it was the cradle, and from thence faith will spread itself all over the earth. All the people will embrace it. The world will become again what it was in the beginning. The enlightened Jews will embrace the Catholic faith. All people will acknowledge God, the only true God. They will be guided by one only Pastor, and governed by one sole Master.

"The second Zion has contributed the most to misguide the spirits of men. She has introduced new Gentiles still more monstrous than those who have reigned upon the earth. She only wants the statues of the Gods to resemble the ancient times. Yea, they have been replaced by these carnal divinities to which they render a sacrilegious adoration, and

lavish an incense to them which they refuse to God.

" The end of this century will be a series of calamities for the people. Very few men are struck with the rapid decline of the present age. All the nations will be enlightened to see their dangerous errors. They will acknowledge how much they have been deceived by the masters who have instructed them, and they will be desolated at the thoughts of having lost so precious a treasure, for having believed such rascals. But at the marked time how many errors will they not abjure, when our children every where, in the name of God, shall make their impious and monstrous errors disappear!—And thou, Crescent, who so much at this day applaudest thyself, the lustre with which thou shinest is soon to be eclipsed;—thy unjust conquests have long enough spun out the time of thy empire, and thy power from one pole to another is far enough extended. Thou dost not suspect that thy ruin is so near, and thou dost not know him who is growing up to operate it.

" Here is the time in which God will break the laws made by the children of the earth. Here is the time wherein he will reprove the science of men, and here is the time of his justice. This is the time that

we must believe all those who announce the new reign of the Lord, for his spirit is with them.

"The ages have not now long to linger for the accomplishment of the promises of the Eternal.—The Eternal calls the times which walk in the shadows and days of darkness, without light and without strength, to come and change the face of the world, and commence his new reign. This is the time of the new Heavens and the new Earth.

"The Eternal has spoken, I shall simplify all things for the happiness of my elect. The moment is at hand when the confusion of languages shall no more be an obstacle to the knowledge of the truth.

"When the impious and his superb eagle in his fury will dare to declare war against the God of Heaven, every thing will give way immediately to his pride. He will dare to make victims for himself among the saints whom Heaven has chosen; he will dare to profane their asylums, to appropriate to himself the gifts of the Eternal by the blackest of crimes, and by his success strengthening his pride he will believe himself master of the world. Then—then—Heaven will stop him: a feeble child will subdue his valour, and his fall will testify that in the sight of the Eternal there is no other power but the power of his arm.

"Already the measure is filled; already the times are accomplished, and the reign of the Word is at hand. Terror will precede to enlighten the blind who go astray, to humble the obstinate high-minded men, and to punish the impious."

These are no common prophecies. Honest fanaticism has had no share in manufacturing them. Vague as the language necessarily is, there is an end and aim in it not to be mistaken; and it is almost startling to observe how much of what was designed has taken place, and how much may still be applied to these immediate times.

Among these communications "For the Benefit and Instruction of all Mankind," are others which are addressed to Wright and Bryan, and to those who, like them, were the unsuspecting tools of the society. I copy them with their cyphers and forms.

Question.

February 9, 1789.

H. W. We supplicate thee to give us thy orders about the two Englishmen B. and W. who arrived here on Thursday the 19th instant.

Answer.

O thou who walkest before them to show them the way, Son of the Voice, tell them that very soon the instruction will grow in their souls; they will believe it and love it. Then, Son of the Voice, I shall let thee know what Heaven ordains about their fate.

Question.

March 18, 1789.

By 2. l. 9.

H. W. Let me know the moment in which B. and W. should be consecrated.

Answer.

Son of the Voice, fidelity and happiness will in the first instance be the fruit of their union, the second will fill them with love and zeal. The moment hastens that is to call them near to us and to you.

Some things seem to have been inserted in their journal in condescension to the weaker brethren, who required to be amused. Such as the following instances:—

In the month of June, 1789, we received a letter from the Union at Rome, which informed us that the weather was as cold there as it is in England in the month of January, and the Archangel Raphael

asked the brethren and sisters if the cold made them uneasy, and said, Have a little patience, and the weather will be warm enough.

"The 17th of June, 1789, we received a letter from the Union at Rome, in which they informed us of a sister, the daughter of a Turk, whom Brother Brimmore baptized at Silesia, in the dominions of the king of Prussia, between ten and fifteen years ago; after having lived some time in the enjoyment of the Christian faith, she was suddenly taken by her father, and carried to Alexandria in Egypt,* which is in the dominions of the Turk, where she lived with her father in much sorrow and trouble. After her father was dead, she was ordered by the Archangel Raphael to dress herself in a soldier's dress, and fly into a Christian country; which she did, and got aboard a Spanish ship, and from this date has been between two and three months at sea."

But though the society occasionally accommodated itself to the capacity of the weaker brethren, its oracles were more frequently delivered to correct troublesome

* Alexandria would naturally be thus distinguished at Avignon—this, therefore, is good proof of the authenticity of the book.

credulity, or repress more troublesome doubts.

Question.

April 12, 1789.

H. W. The three knocks which I. 4. 7. heard in the night, was it any thing supernatural?

Answer.

To 2. I. 9.

Ask no more questions, if thou hast none to make of more importance.

Question.

April 14, 1789.

H. W. If it please thee, I. 4. 7. would be glad to know if the offering which he made on the mountain was acceptable to the Lord his God?

Answer.

If Wisdom hath called thee, if Wisdom hath been thy guide, my son, why dost thou stop? Leave to thy God the care of thy conduct; forget—forget thyself in approaching to him, and his light will enlighten thy soul, and thy spirit shall no more make the law. Believe—believe, my son, that docility is the way which leadeth to knowledge; that with love and simplicity thou shalt have nothing to fear from the snares of Hell, and that Heaven cannot lead thee

astray, for it is Heaven which hath marked to thee thy route.

Question.

July 8, 1789.

H. W. J. 4. 7. prays to know if it is the will of Heaven that he should cause his wife to come with Duché to be consecrated?

Answer.

Heaven sees thy motives, my son, and approves thy zeal; but in order that it may take place ********** do not think of it; thy hope is vain.

Question.

April 16, 1789.

L. 2. 3. prays the H. W. to let him know if the Eternal has accepted of his incense?

Answer.

Raphael is the spirit which thy heart followed, my son, when thou camest into these countries to seek for science and rest: but the spirit which confuses thy idea is not the spirit of Raphael. Mistrust, son that art called, the father of lies. Submit thy spirit to my voice. Believe—believe, my son, and thy God forgives thee, and then thy incense is accepted, and thy return will cover thee with glory.

August 11, 1789.

for the B. 12 April, 1756. Of l. 2. 3.

C. 24 March.

April 1.

If the ardour which animates thee gives at last to thy heart over thy spirit the victory and the empire; if thy desire renounces to discover, before the time, the secret of the mysteries which simple reason is not able to conceive, nothing can, my son, convey an obstacle to that happiness which awaits thee.

Walk without fear, and chase from thy soul the deceiving spirit who wants to lead thee astray. Believe—believe, my son, every thing that I reveal to our elect in the name of the Eternal, and the Eternal will make thee the forerunning instrument of his glory in the places where his clemency wants to pardon those of thy nation whom the enemy seduces by his prestiges.

Question.

August 21, 1789.

* l. 4. 7. prays the H. W. to inform him if it is the will of Heaven for him also to return with l. 2. 3.

* l. 4. 7. and l. 2. 3. seem to mean the two Englishmen. H. W. is evidently *Holy Word.*

Answer.

Yes. Son called, thou canst yet hearken to what I have to say unto thee. Thy fate is in thy hands. It will be great if thou makest haste to offer to thy God, who chuseth thee, the vain efforts of a useless knowledge, when it is only necessary to obey. Forget—forget thy knowledge: it fatigues thy spirits, it hurts thy heart, and retards from thy soul the influence of Heaven. Renounce, in fine, to search into the sublime mysteries of thy God. Believe—believe, and the Eternal will bless thy return, and thy simplicity will confound the knowledge, the pride, and the prepossession of the senseless man, who believeth in his own wisdom much more than in the wisdom of his God.

The subject is so curious that I think you will be pleased to see the character of this mysterious society further exemplified by a few of the sentences, moral maxims, and spiritual instructions, which they delivered as from Heaven. The first is sufficiently remarkable:—

"Woe to him who dares to cover a lie with the sacred name of the Eternal!

" One ray of light is not the entire light.

" A wise man is silent when he ought to be so.

" It is to the simple of heart that the Eternal will grant the wisdom of the Spirit.

" The night was before the day, the day is before the night.

" When God commands, he who consulteth does not obey.

" He who walketh alone easily goes astray.

" To doubt, Is that believing? and to tremble, Is that to hope?

" He who thinks himself wise lies to himself, deceives himself, goeth astray, and knoweth nothing.

" Shall man tremble when *God supports* him?

" The repentance of the wise is in his works, that of the fool in his tears.

" The child of man thinks of man, the child of God thinks of God; he must forget every thing else.

" Fear leads our spirit astray; by laying a weight upon our days it overturns wisdom, it intimidates nature, and the painful seeds of uneasiness and anguish take part in our hearts.

" Heaven explains itself sufficiently when it inspires.

"Wilt thou never hear my word with the ears of thy soul, and wilt thou never overturn the idol of mistrust that is in thy heart?

"The Lord has placed the key of his treasure under the cup of bitterness.

"The ark of God conveys death to those who make use of false keys.

"Who is that man, saith the Lord, that will not abandon his heart to me when I have promised to guide it?

"I am One, and all that is in me is One.

"Remember, and remember well, that the Word is but One for him who desires to comprehend; and there would be no more mysteries for man but for the vanity of his heart, and the folly of his understanding.

"Is it in the tumult of the world that the voice of the Most High can enter into the heart?

"Do not attach any importance to your opinions: Of what avail to your fate are your very weak ideas?

"Forget all, O our friends, except Heaven and yourselves, to obey only what Heaven prescribes to you."

This narrative, and these extracts, require no comment. They prove incontestably the existence of a society of political

Jesuits; they prove also, that however little may have been the religion of these men themselves, they were convinced how indispensably necessary it was for mankind; and that, instead of plotting to break up the system of social order by destroying faith and morals, faith was the engine which they employed to prepare society for some imaginary amelioration, forgetting that nothing which is founded upon delusion can be permanent.

The two Englishmen remained at Avignon six months, and were then informed by the Spirit that they might return. The brethren supplied them with money, so that they went back with more comfort than they came, and had a handsome sum left when they landed in England, where they both returned to their former employments, expecting the accomplishment of the mighty changes which had been foretold. The Revolution brake out.—They who had raised the storm could not direct it: they became its victims—and

knavery reaped what fanaticism had sown, as they who lag in the assault enter the breach over the bodies of the brave who have won the passage for them. What became of the Avignon society Heaven knows. The honest dupes whom they had sent abroad, fully prepared to welcome any novelty as the commencement of the Millennium, were left to their own direction. A king of the Hebrews appeared in England, and Wright and Bryan were, as you may suppose, among the first to acknowledge him. They imagined that the appointed time was come, and published these secrets of the society which they had been ordered to keep concealed. Of the King of the Hebrews in my next.

LETTER LXIX.

Account of Richard Brothers.

My former letters must have shown you that these English, whom we are accustomed to consider as an unbelieving people, are in reality miserably prone to superstition; yet you will perhaps be surprised at the new instance which I am about to relate.

There started up in London, about the beginning of the late war, a new pseudo-prophet, whose name was Richard Brothers, and who called himself King of the Hebrews, and Nephew of God. He taught, that all existing souls had been created at the same time with Adam, and his system was, that they had all lived with him in Paradise, and all fallen with him in consequence of their joint transgression; for all

things which they saw and knew were in God, and indeed were God, and they desired to know something besides God, in which desire they were indulged, fatally for themselves, for the only thing which is not God is Evil. Evil was thus introduced, and they for their punishment cast into hell, that is to say, upon this present earth ; and in this hell they have remained from that time till now, transmigrating from one human body to another. But the term of their punishment is now drawing towards its close: the consummation of all things is at hand, and every one will then recover the recollection of all the scenes and changes through which he has passed. This knowledge has already been vouchsafed in part to Brothers himself, and it is thus that he explained the extraordinary relationship to the Almighty which he laid claim to, asserting that in the days of our Lord, he was the son of James, the Brother of Christ. You know the heretics in their hatred to virginity

and to Mary the most pure, maintain that when Christ's brethren are mentioned in the Gospels, the word is to be understood in its literal and carnal sense; consequently he was then the Nephew of the second Person in the Trinity.

Human fancy, it has been said, cannot imagine a monster whose constituent parts are not all already in existence; it is nearly as impossible for a new heresy to be now devised, so prolific has human error been. This metempsychosis not only bears a general resemblance to that doctrine as held by the Orientals and by Pythagoras, but has been held in this peculiar heretical form by the old heretic Barules, and by the Flagellants of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Brothers had been a lieutenant in the navy, and was known to be insane; but when a madman calls himself inspired, from that moment the disorder becomes infectious. The society at Avignon had unintentionally trained up apostles for this

man. Wright and Bryan had now for some years been looking for the kingdom of Christ, and teaching all within the circle of their influence to expect the same promised day. Of what had been announced to them, much had been too truly accomplished. The world was indeed filled with troubles and dissension, the fire was kindled, the thrones of Europe were shaken, and one of its kings had been brought to an unhappy end, according to the prediction. The laws made by the children of the earth were broken, the reign of terror was begun, and the times disastrous to the full measure of their prophecies. They had been instructed to look for a miraculous deliverer and Lord of the earth, and here was one who laid claim to the character. There were, however, some difficulties. At Avignon they had been informed, that he who was to be the Leader of the Faithful, and to overthrow the kingdoms of the world, was at that time twelve years old, and living at Rome;

even his name had been revealed.* Neither in this, nor in age, nor country, did Brothers answer the prophecy. One of these men therefore decided in his own mind that he was an impostor; he went to see him, with a full belief that whether he was so or not would be revealed to him during the interview, and he took a knife with him, with which, if his suspicions had been confirmed, he was resolved to deliver him such a message from the Lord as Ehud carried to the king of Eglon. Luckily for both parties, Brothers, who little knew the dangerous trial he was undergoing, supported his part so well, that the desperate fanatic was converted.

The new King of the Hebrews had not perhaps a single Jew among his believers.

* At the ninth year, the children shall be solemnly offered to the Mother of God at Genatzans; at that time you will already have made the barbarians feel the blows that you are to give them. Yes; at that age, so very tender, united to you two and to others, Charles will take up for the first time his arms; the glory of his name shall spread every where.

These people, who have in old times suffered well nigh as severely for their credulity in false Messiahs, as for their rejection of the true one, are less disposed to lend ear to such delusions now than in any former time, and here than in any other country. Here they have no amelioration of their condition to wish for; the free exercise of their religion is permitted, what they gain they enjoy in security, and are protected by the state without the trouble of self-defence. The flesh pots of England are not less delicious than those of Egypt, and a land flowing with milk and honey not so attractive for the sons of the Synagogue, as one which abounds with old clothes for the lower order, and loans and contracts for their wealthier brethren. The land of promise offers nothing so tempting to them as scrip and omnium. The King of the Hebrews therefore was not acknowledged by any of his own people; his scheme of pre-existence helped him out of this difficulty. He could tell if any per-

son had been a Jew in any former stage of being, and even of what tribe: that of Judah, as the most favoured, he bestowed liberally upon his believers, and those whom he hoped to convert. He informed Mr Pitt by letter that he was a Jew, some of the royal family were in like manner declared to be Jews, and J.'s friend received from Bryan the same flattering assurance.

Besides the prophets from Avignon, Brothers succeeded in making two other useful and extraordinary disciples. The one, an engraver of first-rate skill in his art, who published a masterly portrait of him, with these words underneath, *Fully believing this to be the man whom God hath appointed, I engrave his likeness.* This was to be seen in all the print-shops. Mr Halhed was the other of these converts, a member of the house of commons, and one of the profoundest oriental scholars then living. This gentleman was in the early part of his life an unbeliever, and had attempted to invalidate the truths of

holy writ by arguments deduced from Indian chronology. The study of Indian mythology brought him back to Christianity, and by a strange perversion of intellect, the Trimourtee of the Hindoos convinced him of the doctrine of the Trinity; and as he recovered his faith he lost his wits. To the astonishment of the world he published a pamphlet avowing his belief that Richard Brothers was the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and that in him the prophecies were speedily to be fulfilled.

Brothers wrote letters to the king, and to all the members of both houses of parliament, calling upon them to give ear to the word of God, and prepare for the speedy establishment of his kingdom upon earth. He announced to his believers his intention of speedily setting out for Jerusalem to take possession of his metropolis, and invited them to accompany him. Some of these poor people actually shut up their shops, forsook their business and their families, and travelled from distant

parts of the country to London to join him, and depart with him whenever he gave the word. Before he went, he said, he would prove the truth of his mission by a public miracle; he would throw down his stick in the Strand at noon day, and it should become a serpent; and he affirmed that he had already made the experiment and successfully performed it in private. A manifest falsehood this, but not a wilful one; in like manner he said that he had seen the Devil walking leisurely up Tottenham-Court-road;—the man was evidently in such a state of mind that his waking dreams were mistaken for realities. He threatened London with an earthquake because of its unbelief, and at length named the day when the city should be destroyed. Many persons left town to avoid this threatened calamity; the day passed by, he claimed the merit of having prevailed in prayer and obtained a respite, and fixed another.

The business was becoming serious: all the madmen and enthusiasts in Eng

land, a land wherein there is never any lack of them, made a common cause with this King of the Hebrews. Pamphlets in his favour swarmed from the press; the prophecy of some old heretic was raked up, which fixed the downfall of the church as destined now to be accomplished; and the number of the Beast was explained by Ludovicus XVI. One madman printed his dreams, another his day-visions; one had seen an angel come out of the sun with a drawn sword in his hand, another had seen fiery dragons in the air, and hosts of angels in battle array: these signs and tokens were represented in rude engravings, and the lower classes of people, to whose capacity and whose hungry superstition they were addressed, began to believe that the seven seals were about to be opened, and all the wonders in the Apocalypse would be displayed. Government at last thought fit to interfere, and committed Brothers to the national hospital for madmen. Mr Halhed made a speech in par-

liament upon this occasion, the most extraordinary perhaps that ever was delivered to a legislative assembly. It was a calm and logical remonstrance against the illegality and unreasonableness of their proceedings. They had imprisoned this person as a madman, he said, because he announced himself as a prophet; but it was incumbent upon them to have fairly examined his pretensions, and ascertained their truth or falsehood, before they had proceeded against him in this manner. Brothers had appealed to the Holy Scriptures, the divine authority of which that house acknowledged; he appealed also to certain of his own predictions as contained in the letters which he had addressed to the king and his ministers;—let them be produced, and the question solemnly investigated as its importance deserved. According to the rules of the house of commons, no motion can be debated or put to the vote, unless it be seconded; Mr Halhed found no one to second

him, and his proposal was thus silently negatived.

Thus easily and effectually was this wild heresy crushed. Brothers continued to threaten earthquakes, fix days for them, and prorogue them after the day was past; but his influence was at an end. The people had lost sight of him; and being no longer agitated by signs and tokens, dreams and denunciations, they forgot him. A few of his steadier adherents persisted in their belief, and comforted him and themselves by reminding him of Daniel in the lions' den, and of Jeremiah in the dungeon. He was lucky enough to find out better consolation for himself. There was a female lunatic in the same hospital, whom he discovered to be the destined Queen of the Hebrews; and as such announced her to the world. At present he and his chosen partner of the throne of David are in daily expectation of a miraculous deliverance, after which they are to proceed to Jerusalem to be crowned, and

commence their reign. Plans and elevations of their palace and of the new Temple have been made for them, and are now being engraved for the public; and in these dreams they will probably continue as long as they live. Upon madmen of this stamp, experience has as little effect as hellebore. Their thoughts of the future are so delightful that they forget the past, and are well nigh insensible to the present, just as all other objects near or distant appear darkened to him who has been looking at the sun. Their hope has neither fear nor doubt to allay it, and its intensity gives them a joy which could scarcely be exceeded by its accomplishment.

LETTER LXX.

Account of Joanna Southcott.

In the early part of the thirteenth century there appeared an English virgin in Italy, beautiful and eloquent, who affirmed that the Holy Ghost was incarnate in her for the redemption of women, and she baptized women in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of herself. Her body was carried to Milan and burnt there. An arch-heretic of the same sex and country is now establishing a sect in England, founded upon a not dissimilar and equally portentous blasphemy. The name of this woman is Joanna Southcott; she neither boasts of the charms of her forerunner, nor needs them. Instead of having an eye which can fascinate, and a tongue which

can persuade to error by glossing it with sweet discourse, she is old, vulgar, and illiterate. In all the innumerable volumes which she has sent into the world, there are not three connected sentences in sequence, and the language alikes violates common sense and common syntax. Yet she has her followers among the educated classes, and even among the beneficed clergy. "If Adam," she says, "had refused listening to a foolish ignorant woman at first, then man might refuse listening to a foolish ignorant woman at last!" —and the argument is admitted by her adherents. When we read in romance of enchanted fountains, they are described as flowing with such clear and sparkling waters as tempt the traveller to thirst; here, there may be a magic in the draught, but he who can taste of so foul a stream must previously have lost his senses. The filth and the abominations of demoniacal witchcraft are emblematical of such delusions; not the golden goblet and

bewitching allurements of Circe and Armida.

The patient and resolute obedience with which I have collected for you some account of this woman and her system, from a pile of pamphlets half a yard high, will, I hope, be imputed to me as a merit. Had the heretics of old been half as voluminous, and half as dull, St Epiphanius would never have persevered through his task.

She was born in Devonshire about the middle of the last century, and seems to have passed forty years of her life in honest industry, sometimes as a servant, at others working at the upholsterers' business, without any other symptom of a disordered intellect than that she was zealously attached to the Methodists. These people were equally well qualified to teach her the arts of imposture, or to drive her mad; or to produce in her a happy mixture of craziness and knavery, ingredients which in such cases are usually found in combination. She mentions in her books a preach-

er who frequented her master's house, and, according to her account, lived in habits of adultery with the wife, trying at the same time to debauch the daughter, while the husband vainly attempted to seduce Joanna herself. This preacher used to terrify all who heard him in prayer, and make them shriek out convulsively. He said that he had sometimes, at a meeting, made the whole congregation lie stiff upon the floor till he had got the evil spirits out of them; that there never was a man so highly favoured of God as himself; that he would not thank God to make him any thing, unless he made him greater than any man upon earth, and gave him power above all men; and he boasted, upon hearing the death of one who had censured him, that he had fasted and prayed three days and three nights, beseeching God to take vengeance upon that man and send him to eternity. Where such impious bedlamites as this are allowed to walk abroad, it is not to be wondered at that

madness should become epidemic. Joanna Southcott lived in a house which this man frequented, and where, notwithstanding his infamous life, his pretensions to supernatural gifts were acknowledged, and he was accustomed to preach and pray. The servants all stood in fear of him. She says he had no power over her, but she used to think the room was full of spirits when he was in prayer; and he was so haunted that he never could sleep in a room by himself, for he said his wife came every night to trouble him: she was perplexed about him, fully believing that he wrought miracles, and wondering by what spirit he wrought them. After she became a prophetess herself, she discovered that this Sanderson was the false prophet in the Revelations, who is to be taken with the Beast, and cast alive with him into a lake of burning brimstone.

Four persons have written to Joanna upon the subject of her pretended mission, each calling himself Christ! One Mr

Leach, a Methodist preacher, told her to go to the Lord in *his name*, and tell the Lord that *he said* her writings were inspired by the Devil." These circumstances show how commonly delusion, blasphemy, and madness are to be found in this country, and may lessen our wonder at the phrenzy of Joanna and her followers. Her own career began humbly, with prophecies concerning the weather, such as the popular English almanacks contain, and threats concerning the fate of Europe and the successes of the French, which were at that time the speculations of every newspaper, and of every ale-house politician. Some of these guesses having chanced to be right, the women of the family in which she then worked at the upholstering business began to lend ear to her, and she ventured to submit her papers to the judgment of one Mr Pomeroy, the clergyman whose church she attended in Exeter. He listened to her with timid curiosity, rather wanting courage than credulity to become

her disciple; received from her certain sealed prophecies which were at some future time to be opened, when, as it would be seen that they had been accomplished, they would prove the truth of her inspiration; and sanctioned, or seemed to sanction, her design of publishing her call to the world. But in this publication his own named appeared, and that in such a manner as plainly to imply, that if he had not encouraged her to print, he had not endeavoured to prevent her from so doing. His eyes were immediately opened to his own imprudence, whatever they may have been to the nature of her call, and he obtained her consent to insert an advertisement in the newspaper with her signature, stating that he had said it was the work of the Devil. But here the parties are at issue: as the advertisement was worded, it signifies that Mr Pomeroy always said her calling was from the Devil; on the other hand, Joanna and her witnesses protest that what she had signed was merely an acknow-

ledgment that Mr Pomeroy had said, after her book was printed, the Devil had instigated her to print his name in it. This would not be worthy of mention, if it were not for the very extraordinary situation into which this gentleman has brought himself. Wishing to be clear of the connection in which he had so unluckily engaged, he burnt the sealed papers which had been entrusted to his care. From that time all the Joannians, who are now no inconsiderable number, regard him as the arch-apostate. He is the Jehoiakim who burnt Jeremiah's roll of prophecies; he is their Judas Iscariot, a second Lucifer, son of the Morning. They call upon him to produce these prophecies, which she boldly asserts, and they implicitly believe, have all been fulfilled, and therefore would convince the world of the truth of her mission. In vain does Mr Pomeroy answer that he has burnt these unhappy papers;—in an unhappy hour for himself *did he* burn them! Day after day long letters are

dispatched to him, sometimes from Joanna herself, sometimes from her brother, sometimes from one of her four-and-twenty elders, filled with exhortation, invective, texts of scripture, and denunciations of the Law in this world and the Devil in the next; and these letters the prophetess prints, for this very sufficient reason—that all her believers purchase them. Mr Pomeroy sometimes treats them with contempt, at other times he appeals to their compassion, and beseeches them, if they have any bowels of Christian charity, to have compassion on him, and let him rest, and no longer add to the inconceivable and irreparable injuries which they have already occasioned him. If he is silent, no matter, on they go, printing copies of all which they write, and when he is worried into replying, his answers also serve to swell Joanna's books. In this manner is this poor man, because he has recovered his senses, persecuted by a crazy prophetess, and her four-and-twenty crazy elders, who

seem determined not to desist, till, one way or other, they have made him as ripe for Bedlam as they are themselves.

The books which she sends into the world are written partly in prose, partly in rhyme, all the verse, and the greater part of the prose, being delivered in the character of the Almighty! It is not possible to convey any adequate idea of this unparalleled and unimaginable nonsense by any other means than literal transcript.* Her hand-writing was illegibly bad, so that at last she found it convenient to receive orders to throw away the pen, and deliver her oracles orally; and her words flow from her faster than her scribes can write them down. This may be well believed, for they are mere words, and nothing else: a rhapsody of texts, vulgar dreams, and vulgar interpretations, vulgar types and vulgar applications:—the vilest string of words in the vilest doggerel verse, which has

* See note at the end of the letter.

no other connection than what the vilest rhymes have suggested, she vents, and her followers receive, as the dictates of immediate inspiration. A herd, however, was ready to devour this garbage as the bread of life. Credulity and Vanity are foul feeders.

The clergy in her own neighbourhood were invited by her, by private letters, to examine her claims, but they treated her invitation with contempt: the bishop also did not choose to interfere;—of what avail, indeed, would it have been to have examined her, when they had no power to silence her blasphemies! She found believers at a distance. Seven men came from different parts of the country to examine—that is—to believe in her; these were her seven stars; and when at another time seven more arrived upon the same wise errand, she observed, in allusion to one of those vulgar sayings from which all her allusions are drawn, that her seven stars were come to fourteen. Among these early believers were three clergymen, one of them a man of fashion, fortune,

and noble family. It is not unlikely that the woman at first suspected the state of her own intellects: her letters appear to indicate this; they express a humble submission to wiser judgments than her own; and could she have breathed the first thoughts of delusion into the ear of some pious confessor, it is more than probable that she would have soon acknowledged her error at his feet, and the phrensy which has now infected thousands, would have been cut off on its first appearance. But when she found that persons into whose society nothing else could ever have elevated her, listened to her with reverence, believed all her ravings, and supplied her with means and money to spread them abroad, it is not to be wondered at if she went on more boldly;—the gainfulness of the trade soon silencing all doubts of the truth of her inspiration.

Some of her foremost adherents were veterans in credulity: they have been initiated in the mysteries of animal magnet-

ism, had received spiritual circumcision from Brothers, and were thus doubly qualified for the part they were to act in this new drama of delusion. To accommodate them, Joanna confirmed the authenticity of this last fanatic's mission, and acknowledged him as King of the Hebrews,—but she dropt his whole mythology. Her heresy in its main part is not new. The opinion that redemption extended to men only and not to women, had been held by a Norman in the sixteenth century, as well as by the fair English heretic already mentioned. This man, in a book called *Virgo Veneta*, maintained that a female Redeemer was necessary for the daughters of Eve, and announced an old woman of Venice of his acquaintance as the Saviour of her sex. Bordonius, a century ago, broached even a worse heresy. In a work upon miracles, printed at Parma, he taught that women did not participate in the atonement, because they were of a different species from man, and were incapable of

eternal life. Joanna and her followers are too ignorant to be acquainted with these her prototypes in blasphemy, and the whole merit of originality in her system must be allowed her; as indeed she has exceeded her forerunners in the audacity of her pretensions. She boldly asserts that she is the Woman in the Revelations, who has the Moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars: the twelve stars being her twelve apostles, who with the second dozen of believers make up her four-and-twenty elders. In her visitation it was told her that the angels rejoiced at her birth, because she was born to deliver both men and angels from the insults of the Devil. Let it be lawful for me to repeat these blasphemies, holding them up to merited abhorrence. The scheme of redemption, she says, is completed in her, and without her would be imperfect; by woman came the fall of man, by woman must come his redemption: woman plucked the evil fruit, and woman must pluck the

good fruit; if the Tree of Knowledge was violated by Eve, the Tree of Life is reserved for Joanna. Eve was a bone from Adam, she is a bone from Christ the second Adam. She is the Bride, the promised seed who is to bruise the Serpent's head; she it is who claims the promise made at the creation, that woman should be the helpmate of man, and by her the Creator fulfils that promise, and acquits himself of the charge of having given to man the woman in vain. The evening star was placed in the firmament to be her type. While she arrogates so much to herself, she is proportionately liberal to her followers: they have been appointed to the four-and-twenty elderships: and to one of them, when he died, a higher character was more blasphemously attributed: she assured his relations that he was gone to plead the promises before the Lord; that to him was to be given the key of the bottomless pit, and that the time was at hand when he should be seen descending in the

air,—for they knew not the meaning of our Saviour's words when he said, "Ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds, in power and great glory!"

The immediate object of her call is to destroy the Devil: of this the Devil was aware, and that it might not be said he had had foul play, a regular dispute of seven days was agreed on between him and Joanna, in which she was to be alone, and he to bring with him as many of the Powers of Darkness as he pleased: but he was not to appear visibly; for, as he did not choose to make his appearance on a former occasion, when some of her elders went to give him the meeting, but had disappointed them, he was not to be permitted to manifest himself bodily now. The conditions were, that if she held out with argument against him for seven days, the Woman should be freed, and he fall; but if she yielded, Satan's kingdom was to stand, and a second fall of the human race would be the consequence. Accordingly, she went

alone into a solitary house for this conference. Joanna was her own secretary upon this occasion, and the process-verbal of the conference has been printed, as literally taken down; for she was ordered to set down all his blasphemies, and show to the world what the language of Hell is. It is by no means a polite language;—indeed the proficiency which Satan displays in the vulgar tongue is surprising.

Of all Joanna's books this is the most curious. Satan brought a friend with him, and they made up a story for themselves which has some ingenuity. "It is written," said they, "Be still, and know that I am God;" this still worship did not suit Satan; he was a lively cheerful spirit, full of mirth and gaiety, which the Lord could not bear, and therefore cast him out of Heaven. This, according to Apollyon's account of Heaven, could have been no great evil. "Thou knowest," he says, "it is written of God, he is a consuming fire, and who can dwell in everlasting burnings?

Our backs are not brass, nor our sinews iron, to dwell with God in Heaven." The Heaven therefore which men mistakingly desire, is in its nature the very Hell of which they are so much afraid; and it is sufficient proof of the truth of all this, that the Devil invites them to make themselves happy and lead a gay life, agreeably to his own cheerful disposition, whereas religion enjoins self-denial, penitence, and all things which are contrary to our natural inclinations. Satan accounted to Joanna for her inspiration by this solution: An evil spirit had loved her from her youth up, he found there was no other access to her heart than by means of religion; and, being himself able to foresee future events, imparted this knowledge to her in the character of a good spirit. This spirit, he said, was one which she had been well acquainted with; it was that of one Mr Tollart, who had told her if she would not have him for a husband he should *die* for her sake, and accordingly he had died.

But this deception had now been carried so far that Satan was angry, and threatened, unless she broke her seals and destroyed her writings, he would tear her in pieces.

The conference terminated like most theological disputes. Both parties grew warm. Apollyon interfered, and endeavoured to accommodate matters, but without effect, and Joanna talked Satan out of all patience. She gave him, as he truly complained, ten words for one, and allowed him no time to speak. All men, he said, were tired of her tongue already, and now she had tired the Devil. This was not unreasonable; but he proceeded to abuse the whole sex, which would have been ungracious in any one, and in him was ungrateful. He said no man could tame a woman's tongue—the sands of an hour-glass did not run faster—it was better to dispute with a thousand men than one woman. After this dispute she fasted forty days; but this fast, which is regarded by her believers as so miraculous, was

merely a Catholic Lent, in which she abstained from fish as well as flesh.

The Moon which is under her feet in the Revelations, typifies the Devil: for the moon, it seems, having power to give light by night but not by day, is Satan's kingdom, and his dwelling-place; he, I conclude, being the very person commonly called the Man in the Moon; a conjecture of my own, which, you must allow, is strongly confirmed by his horns. Once, when the Lord made her the same promise as Herod had done to Herodias, she requested that Satan might be cut off from the face of the earth as John the Baptist had been. This petition she was instructed to write, and seal it with three seals, and carry it to the altar when she received the sacrament! and a promise was returned that it should be granted. Her dreams are usually of the Devil. Once she saw him like a pig with his mouth tied; at another time skinned his face with her nails after a fierce battle; once she bit off his fingers,

and thought the blood sweet,—and once she dreamt she had fairly killed him. But neither has the promise of his destruction been as yet fulfilled, nor the dream accomplished.

This phrensy would have been speedily cured in our country; bread and water, a solitary cell, and a little wholesome discipline are specifics in such cases. Mark the difference in England. No bishop interferes; she therefore boldly asserts that she has the full consent of the bishops to declare that her call is from God, because, having been called upon to disprove it, they keep silent. She who was used to earn her daily bread by daily labour, is now taken into the houses of her wealthy believers, regarded as the most blessed among women, carried from one part of England to another, and treated every where with reverence little less than idolatry. Meantime dictating books as fast as her scribes can write them down, she publishes them as fast as they are written, and the Joannians buy

them as fast as they are published. Nor is this her only trade. The seals in the Revelations furnished her with a happy hint. She calls upon all persons "to sign their names for Christ's glorious and peaceable kingdom to be established, and to come upon earth, and his will to be done on earth as it is done in heaven, and for Satan's kingdom to be destroyed, which is the prayer and desire of Joanna Southcott." They who sign this are to be sealed. Now if this temporal sealing, which is mentioned by St John in the Revelations, had been understood before this time, men would have begun sealing themselves without the visitation of the spirit; and if she had not understood it and explained it now, it would have been more fatal for herself and for all mankind than the fall of Eve was. The mystery of sealing is this: whosoever signs his name receives a sealed letter containing these words: *The Sealed of the Lord, the Elect, Precious, Man's Redemption, to inherit the Tree of Life, to be*

made Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Signed *Joanna Southcott.* I know not what the price of this initiation is; but she boasts of having sealed above eight thousand persons, so that the trade is a thriving one.

And these things are believed in England! in England, where Catholic Christians are so heartily despised for superstition; in England, where the people think themselves so highly enlightened,—in this country of reason and philosophy, and free enquiry! It is curious to observe how this age in which we live is denominated by every writer just as its temper accords with his own views: with the Infidel, it is the Age of Reason; with the Churchman, the Age of Infidelity; with the Chemist, the Age of Philosophy; with Rulers, the Age of Anarchy; with the People, the Age of Oppression,—every one beholding the prospect through a coloured glass, and giving it sunshine or shade, frost or verdure, according to his own fancy, none looking

round him, and seeing it fairly as it is. Yet surely if we consider the ignorance of the great majority of the English, the want of anchorage for their faith, the want of able directors for their souls, the rapidity with which novelties of any kind are circulated throughout the country, the eagerness with which the credulous listen to every new blasphemy, the contemptuous indifference of the clergy to any blasphemy, provided it does not immediately threaten themselves, the unlimited toleration shown to Jews, Gentiles, and Heretics of every description,—above all, if we remember that every person has the power of comparing these delusive books with the Bible, of which they are instructed to consider themselves competent expounders,—we must acknowledge that there never was any age or any country so favourable to the success of imposture, and the growth of superstition, as this very age and this very England.

I have to add concerning Joanna, that

she prophesies how she and her believers are to be tried in the ensuing year, and that this awful trial will be only second to that of our blessed Lord at Pilate's bar! What new juggle is in preparation I pretend not to divine. Thus much is certain, that her believers are proof against conviction, and you will agree with me in thinking no further trial necessary to prove that she and her abettors ought either to be punished as impostors, or silenced as lunatics.*

* The Translator has been curious enough to enquire the event of this trial, which may be related in few words. None but her believers assembled; they provided an attorney to give their proceedings some of the ceremonials of legality, examined witnesses to prove the good character of the prophetess, signed a profession of belief in her,—and afterwards published an account of all this folly under the title of The Trial of Joanna Southcott. Joanna had predicted that at this trial she was to be cast into a trance;—not thinking this convenient when the time appointed came, she had a revelation to say, that if any of her judges required it, the Lord would still entrance her,

but that it would certainly be her death: and thus throwing herself upon the mercy of her own accomplices, it will easily be guessed that none among them insisted upon the proof. One of the company enquired whether Satan knew he was cast by this trial; as, in that case, it was to be presumed he would rage against her and her friends with the utmost of his fury. This gentleman would have been a good subject for a night-mare.

D. Manuel might well say that nothing but literal transcript could convey an idea of this woman's vulgarity and nonsense; witness the passages which he has selected.—TR.

So, learned men, no more contend,
Till you have seen all clear,
The Woman clothed with the Sun
A wonder to you here.
So, in amaze, you all may gaze,
As Adam did at first,
To see the bone to him unknown,
The woman there was placed.
The woe you see, she brought on he,
And the first woe for man;—
But how shall Satan now get free,
She casts her woe on man.—

Though 'twas not she, I must tell ye,
Did cast the woe on man;
The serpent was condemned by she,
And there her woe must come.

It is speaking within compass, to say that she has sent into the world above twenty thousand of such verses as these, as the dictates of the Spirit!

What follows is in the words of one of her chosen disciples:—"On Monday morning Joanna received a letter from Exeter, which informed her she would have Mr Jones's answer about Mr Pomeroy in the evening; and her fears for him flung her into a violent agitation; every nerve in her shook, and she fell sick as though she would have fainted away. She could not keep in her bed, but laid herself on the floor in agonies, and said she knew not whether to pity or condemn him; but at last got up in a rage against the Devil, and said her revenge would be sweet to see the Devil chained down, and she should like, with a sharp sword to cut him in pieces. She then got into bed, exclaiming against the clergy, and asked for a glass of wine; but she brought it up immediately. Soon after the bason was set upon the bed, she took it up and dashed it violently across the room, and broke it to pieces. After that she had some lamb brought up for her dinner; she tried to

swallow a mouthful but could not, but spit it into another bason, and said she could neither swallow the wine nor the lamb, but found the fury of the Lord break in upon her, and she dashed the second bason on the floor. She then said she felt herself happier and easier since she had broken both the basons; for so would the Lord, in his anger, break the clergy."

This is from a book with the following curious title:

MR JOSEPH SOUTHCOTT,

THE BROTHER OF

JOANNA SOUTHCOTT,

WILL NOW COME FORWARD AS DINAH'S BRETHREN DID,

THAT THEY SHALL NOT DEAL WITH HIS SISTER

AS THEY WOULD WITH A HARLOT,

FOR SO THEY ARE NOW DEALING WITH HER.

AND HE WILL PROVE TO THE WORLD WHERE THE

ADULTERY IS COMMITTED, BY MEN WHO ARE

UNCIRCUMCISED IN HEART AND LIFE:

AND NOW HE WILL EXPEND ALL THAT HE HAS

IN THE WORLD, IF REQUIRED, IN THE HONEST

DEFENCE OF HER CHARACTER, TILL HE HAS SLAIN

THE UNCIRCUMCISED PHILISTINES,

AND ENTIRELY FREED HIS SISTER FROM THE

REPROACHES OF THEIR ADULTERY.

A few flowers of infernal eloquence should be added from The Dispute with the Powers of Darkness. Satan says to her, "Thou infamous b—ch! thou hast been flattering God that he may stand thy friend. Such low cunning art I despise.—Thou wheening devil! stop thy d—mn'd eternal tongue; thou runnest on so fast all the Devils in Hell cannot keep up with thee.—God hath done something to chuse a b—ch of a woman that will down-argue the Devil, and scarce give him room to speak."—It may truly be said, in Joanna's own words, "*If the woman is not ashamed of herself, the Devil cannot shame her.*"

If the language of Joanna herself is grovelling in the very mud and mire of baseness and vulgarity, one of her elders has soared into the sublime of frenzy. The passage is long, but deserves insertion, as, perhaps, there does not exist elsewhere so complete a specimen of a prophet rampant. The gentleman begins in some plain prose reflections upon the Fall, and goes on addressing the Devil, till he has worked himself up, and begins thus to rave in rhythm.

" —Then where's thy ground on earth? receive thy doom, the pit...there twist in dames, and there thy like deceive!—Then Cain receive thy doom from Abel's blood. Then where is Pharaoh and his host?—Judge then, need Moses fear! Where is the

Lion fallen? and the pit has oped its mouth,—the covering's dropt;—the Lamb has nought to fear—then roar no more to shake the earth and sea. Where now's the eagle and vultur'd host—thy wings are pluck'd on earth, she stands defenceless, the fatal net beneath.—The Dove now has protection; she ranges earth and sea, and soars aloft unhurt, unfeared, to carry peace to all.—The Ark is opened now, she brings the olive branch,—the floods are past, where's now the giant race?—Who pressed on Lot? 'Twas thee the proud oppressor! Where art thou now?—Where is thy pride and city? Knowest thou the words, come out! come out! let Sodom feel its doom. Where now is Lot? At Zoar safe! Where is his wife? Is she not salt all?—The writing's on the wall.—Thou lewdly revellest with the bowls of God.—Thy kingdom's past away—Now see my Daniel rise—Who cast him in the den?—'Twas thee—Thou rolledst the stone, thou sealedst his doom—the roaring Lion thee! Then let the stone return, the seal be broke, and go thou in his stead. Where is the image gold and Bel? Where is proud Babel's builder? Confusion is thy name: confusion is thy doom! Let Bel asunder burst! the pitch, and tar, and walls of wood expose thy make, deceit and craft, and pass in flames away. The God of Daniel stands—Daniel, rise up!—Six days are past—the seventh now

is here—seven times refined and purified—in innocency come.—The emerald, unhurt in fire, displays great Judah's son.—Let Urim's Light and Thummim shine in bright perfection's day. The twelve now stand upon the plate—the fourth denotes great Judah's son, who is the rightful heir. The stones denote old Jacob's sons, their light and quality—they shine as stars in Jesus' crown upon the Woman's head.—The sun unveil'd shall now arise—The Moon from scarlet shall emerge—The stars from darkness now appear to light the midnight hour—Then where art thou, O Satan! Where are thy heads, and horns, and dragon's tail, which slew and hurt the living stars? Where are thy rays of fire—thy watery floods—behold they are past away—The woman's fears of thee are o'er—the wilderness receives her child, whose iron rod now feel. The pit has oped its mouth—thou now art cast, shut up and sealed—the saints now judge the earth. The Omnipotent is here in power and spirit in the word—The sword, white horse, and King of Kings has drawn the flaming sword! Rejoice, ye saints, rejoice! The Beast and Dragon, mountain, tree, no more shall hurt, devour, becloud, the Saint, the gold, and vine. The gold and gems appear—The mighty earthquake now displays the hidden Son of God. The rod and smitten rock gush forth, and smite and slay, and make alive,

now saves and now destroys. The cloud and glory, Jonah's sign, display the virtues of the word, the light and darkness shews. The Gospel brings the light, and life, and death—and death as men obey or mock. The six denotes the suffering time to shew the Son of Man—The sign within the Sun—The fowls now feast on thee! Then where's thy former reign? Beneath the rod of Moses see thy fall from Heaven's height. Son of the Morning, Lucifer, no more oppress—be thou a fallen star! Great Gog and Agag, where are ye? The walls of Jericho art thou; fall flat! Joshua's ram's horns, the seven and twelve, pass Jordan's stream.—Where is the Lion, Bear, Goliath huge, but in the centre thee. David appears, a stripling youth, now tears, and slays, and slings the stone, and smites thy dragon's head. Now see great David's reign—The temple's stones, unhewed by man in those days, unite, the King of Peace amidst the seven in oil unite, and in a stone with seven eyes appears. The stately fabric now is laid, founded and topped with gems of every hue. The ark of Moses now is built—The words, the laws, the sceptre, all unite, and Aaron's budded rod—He now is chosen; eat the bread, prepare the sacrifice. John eats the book which sweet and bitter is—He prophesies; the temple metes, and stands before the Lamb. The temple

measures, and anoints, and Moses's tabernacle. The witnesses, Matthew and John, as olive trees appear. —The broken stones of Moses now uplift, renewed in books arise from death—The Lord's anointed reigns—The rods, or laws, of Ephraim ten, unite in one and hold by Judah's skirt—The Son of Man o'er Israel reigns—The dry bones now arise—Herod ends thy earthly reign—The bond of union now is come—The marriage ring appears—The Bride is come—The Bridegroom now receives the marriage seal—The Law and Gospel now unite—The Moon and Sun appear—Caleb and Joshua pass the stream in triumph to restore. Where now, thou Canaanite, art thou? Where all thy maddened crew?—

" Hittites, be gone! no more appear to hurt or to annoy:
Now Israel's sons in peace succeed, and Canaan's land enjoy.
Behold from Edom I appear with garments dipt in blood;
My sons are freed and saved, and wash'd amidst the purple flood.
The law, or moon, imperfect was to save—
But now the star points dead men to the grave.

" Mercy benign appears—The Gospel Son em-

braces all—The Spirit and the Bride invite, and offer wine and milk—but not to mockers here. Infinity of love and grace! Gentiles and Jews unite, no more from love to part. Six days are past—Peter, and James, and John, behold my glory in my word.

"The Law and Prophets now are seen with Jesus' word to shine,
But what hast thou, thou serpent here, to do with love benign?

"Tremble and flee, 'tis done. The seals are burst—the vials pour and end thy destiny.

"These are a small part of the thoughts of the judgments of God pronounced on Satan," concludes the writer, who is a gentleman of vast respectability.

One of her books has the title printed on the last page, because it was ordered that the book should contain neither more nor less than forty-eight pages. Another has a seal in the middle of it, bearing the letters J. C.—the J., it is said, being meant for Jesus and Joanna!!

LETTER LXXI.

The Coxcomb. — Fashionables. — Fops. — Egyptian Fashions.—Dances.—Visiting.— Walkers.—The Fancy.—Agriculturists.— The Fat Ox.—The Royal Institution.— Metaphysics.

WHETHER the Coxcomb be an animal confined to Europe I know not, but in every country in Christendom he is to be found with the same generic character.

Pien di smorfiose grazie,
E mastro assai profondo
Nelle importanti inezie,
Nei nulli del bel mondo;
E in quella soavissima
Arte tanto eloquente,
Che sa si lungo spazio
Parlar senza dir niente.

Con tratti di malizia,
A spese altrui festivo;
Sempre in bocca risuonagli
Quel tuono decisivo,
Quell' insolenza amabile,
Che con egual franchezza
Con un' occhiata rapida
O tutto loda, o sprezza.*

"There is however no country in which there are so many varieties of the animal as in England, none where he flourishes so successfully, makes such heroic endeavours for notoriety, and enjoys so wide a sphere of it.

The highest order is that of those who have invented for themselves the happy title of Fashionables. These gentlemen

* Full of affected graces, and a master sufficiently profound of the important inanities, the nothings of the fine world; and of that sweetest art so eloquent, which can talk so long and say nothing; with traits of malice, mirthful at another's expense: always in his mouth that decisive tone, that amiable insolence, which, with equal freedom at a glance, praises or condemns by wholesale.—Tr.

stand highest in the scale of folly, and lowest in that of intellect, of any in the country, inasmuch as the rivalry between them is which shall excel his competitors in frivolity. There was a man in England half a century ago well known for this singular kind of insanity, that he believed his soul had been annihilated within him, while he was yet living. What this poor maniac conceived to have been done by his soul, these gentlemen have successfully accomplished for themselves with their intellect. Their souls might be lodged in a nutshell without incommoding the maggot who previously tenanted it; and if the whole stock of their ideas were transferred to the maggot, they would not be sufficient to confuse his own. It is impossible to describe them, because no idea can be formed of infinite littleness: you might as reasonably attempt to dissect a bubble, or to bottle moonshine, as to investigate their characters: they prove satisfactorily the existence of a vacuum:

the sum total of their being is composed of negative quantities.

One degree above or below these are the fops who appear in a tangible shape; they who prescribe fashions to the tailor, that the tailor may prescribe them to the town; who decide upon the length of a neck-handkerchief, and regulate the number of buttons at the knees of their breeches. One person has attained the very summit of ambition by excelling all others in the jet varnish of his boots. Infinite are the exertions which have been made to equal him,—the secret of projection could not be more eagerly desired than the receipt of his blacking; and there is one competitor whose boots are allowed to approach very near to the same point of perfection;—still they only approach it. This meritorious rival loses the race of fame by half a neck, and in such contests it is *aut Cæsar, aut nihil.* To have the best blacked boots in the world, is a worthy object of successful emulation,—but to have only the second-

best, is to be Pompey in the Pharsalia of Fashion.

During one period of the French Revolution the Brutus head-dress was the mode, though Brutus was at the same time considered as the Judas Iscariot of political religion, being indeed at this day to an orthodox Anti-Jacobin what Omar is to the Persians; that is, something a great deal worse than the Devil. "I suppose, sir," said a London hair-dresser to a gentleman from the country,—"I suppose, sir, you would like to be dressed in the Brutus style." "What style is that?" was the question in reply. "All over frizzley, sir, like the Negers,—They be Brutes you know." If Apollo be the model of the day, these gentlemen wear stays; if Hercules, the tailor supplies breasts of buckram, broad shoulders, and brawny arms. At present, as the soldiers from Egypt have brought home with them broken limbs and ophthalmia, they carry an arm in a sling, or walk the streets with a green

shade over the eyes. Every thing now must be Egyptian: the ladies wear crocodile ornaments, and you sit upon a sphinx in a room hung round with mummies, and with the long black lean-armed long-nosed hieroglyphical men, who are enough to make the children afraid to go to bed. The very shopboards must be metamorphosed into the mode, and painted in Egyptian letters, which, as the Egyptians had no letters, you will doubtless conceive must be curious. They are simply the common characters, deprived of all beauty and all proportion by having all the strokes of equal thickness, so that those which should be thin look as if they had the elephantiasis.

Men are tempted to make themselves notorious in England by the ease with which they succeed. The newspapers, in the dearth of matter for filling their daily columns, are glad to insert any thing,—when one lady comes to town, when another leaves it, when a third expects her

accouchement; the grand dinner of one gentleman, and the grand supper of another are announced before they take place; the particulars are given after the action, a list of the company inserted, the parties who danced together exhibited like the characters of a drama in an English bill of the play, and the public are informed what dances were called for, and by whom. There is something so peculiarly elegant and appropriate in the names of the fashionable dances, that it is proper to give you a specimen. Moll in the Wad is one; —you must excuse me for not translating this, for really I do not understand it. Drops of Brandy, another; and two which are at present in high vogue are, The Devil among the Tailors, and Go to the Devil and shake yourself. At these balls the floors are chalked in colours in carpet patterns, a hint taken from the lame beggars who write their petitions upon the flag-stones in the street. This is so excellently done, that one should think

it would be painful to trample on and destroy any thing so beautiful, even though only made to be destroyed. These things indicate the same sort of want of feeling as the ice-palaces of Russia, and the statue of snow made by Michel Angelo at Pietro de Medici's command. We are surrounded in this world with what is perishable, that we may be taught to set our hearts and hopes upon the immutable and everlasting;—it is ill done, then, to make perishableness the food of pride.

The system of visiting in high life is brought to perfection in this country. Were a lady to call in person upon all the numerous acquaintance whom she wishes sometimes to crowd together at her Grand Parties, her whole time would be too little to go from door to door. This, therefore, being confessedly imposssible, the card-currency of etiquette was issued, and the name dropt by a servant, allowed to have the same saving virtue of civility as the real presence. But the servants

began to find this a hard duty, and found out that they were working like postmen without any necessity for so doing; so they agreed at last to meet at certain pot-houses, and exchange cards, or leave them there as at a post-office, where each in turn calls to deposit all with which he is charged, and to receive all which are designed for him.

I have spoken elsewhere of the Turf, a road to fame always, and oftentimes to ruin; but for this so large a fortune is required, that the famous must always be few. A man, however, of moderate, or of no fortune, may acquire great glory by riding a score of horses almost or quite to death, for the sake of showing in how short a time he can go fifty leagues. Others, with a nobler ambition, delight in displaying their own speed. I know not whether Christoval de Mesa would have said of this sort of walking or of running, as he did of the game of *pelota*:

Es el que mas a la virtud se llega,
que ni entorpece, ni el ingenio embota,
antes da ligereza y exercita,
y pocos que la juegan tienen gota.*

I know not whether he would have said this of their exercise; but this I know, that some of the English gentlemen would make the best running footmen in the world.

Another school—to borrow a term from the Philosophers—is that of the Amateurs of Boxing, who call themselves *the Fancy*. They attend the academies of the two great professors Jackson and Mendoza, the Aristotle and Plato of pugilism,—bring up youths of promise from the country to be trained, and match them according to their wind, science, and bottom. But I am writing to the uninitiated,—bottom means courage, that sort of it which will endure a great deal. Too much vivacity

* It is that which most approaches to virtue, which neither stupifies, nor degrades the understanding, but, on the contrary, exercises it and gives agility, and few who play at it have the gout.—Tr.

is rather against a man; if he indulges in any flourishes or needless gesticulations he wastes his wind, and though he may be admitted to be *a pleasant fighter*, this is considered as a disadvantage. When the champion comes off victor, after suffering much in the contest, he is said to be *much punished*. There is something to be attended to besides science, which is the body: it is expedient to swallow raw eggs for the wind, and to feed upon beef as nearly raw as possible: they who do this, and practise with weights in their hands, are said to *cultivate the muscles*. Upon the brutality of this amusement I have already said something, nor is it needful to comment upon what is so apparent;—but it is just that I should now state what may truly be said in its defence. It is alleged, that in consequence of this custom, no people decide their quarrels with so little injury to each other as the English. The Dutch slice each other with their snickersnees; we know how deadly the knife is

employed in our country;—the American twists the hair of his enemy round his thumb, and scoops out an eye with his finger;—but in England a boxing-match settles all disputes among the lower classes, and when it is over they shake hands, and are friends. Another equally beneficial effect is the security afforded to the weaker by the laws of honour, which forbid all undue advantages; the man who should aim a blow below the waist, who should kick his antagonist, strike him when he is down, or attempt to injure him after he had yielded, would be sure to experience the resentment of the mob, who, on such occasions, always assemble to see what they call fair play, which they enforce as rigidly as the Knights of the Round Table did the laws of chivalry.

The next persons to be noticed are those who seek notoriety by more respectable means; but, following wise pursuits foolishly, live in a sort of intellectual limbo between the worlds of Wisdom and Folly.

The fashionable agriculturists are of this class: men who assume, as the creed of their philosophical belief, a foolish saying of some not very wise author, "That he who makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, is the greatest benefactor to his species." With these persons, the noblest employment of human intellect is to improve the size of turnips and cabbages, and for this they lay aside all other studies. "When my friends come to see me in the summer," said one of these gentlemen, "I like to hear them complain that they have not been able to sleep in their beds for heat, because then I know things are growing out of doors." *Quicquid amat valde amat*, may truly be said of the Englishman; his pursuit always becomes his passion; and, if great follies are oftentimes committed in consequence of this ardour, it must not be forgotten that it leads also to great actions, and to important public benefits.

Of this class the breeders are the most

remarkable, and least useful. Their object is to improve the cattle of the country, for which purpose they negotiate with the utmost anxiety the amours of their cows and sheep. Such objects, exclusively pursued, tend little to improve either the intellect or the manners:—these people will apply to a favourite pig, or a Herefordshire bull, the same epithets of praise and exclamations of delight, which a sculptor would bestow upon the Venus de Medici, or the Apollo Belvidere. This passion is carried to an incredible degree of folly: the great object of ambition is to make the animal as fat as possible, by which means it is diseased and miserable while it lives, and of no use to any but the tallow-chandler when dead. At this very time there is a man in London belonging to a fat ox, who has received more money for having fattened this ox than Newton obtained for all his discoveries, or Shakspeare for all his works. Crowds go to see the monster, which is a shapeless mass of living

fat. A picture has been painted both of man and beast, a print engraved from it in order that the one may be immortalized as the fattest ox that ever was seen, and the other, as the man that fed him to that size; and two thousand persons have subscribed for this at a guinea each. A fat pig has been set up against him, which, I know not why, does not seem to take. The pig is acknowledged to be a pig of great merit, but he is in a manner neglected, and his man complains of the want of taste in the public.

To end the list of fashions, what think you of philosophy in fashion? You must know that though the wise men of old could find out no royal road to the mathematics, in England they have been more ingenious, and have made many short cuts to philosophy for the accommodation of ladies and gentlemen. The arts and sciences are now taught in lectures to fashionable audiences of both sexes; and there is a Royal Institution for this pur-

pose, where some of the most scientific men in the kingdom are thus unworthily employed. I went there one morning with J. and his wife,—whom you are not to suspect of going for any other purpose than to see the place. Part of the men were taking snuff to keep their eyes open, others more honestly asleep, while the ladies were all upon the watch, and some score of them had their tablet and pencils, busily noting down what they heard, as topics for the next conversation party. "Oh!" said J. when he came out, in a tone which made it half groan half interjection, "the days of tapestry hangings and worked chair-bottoms were better days than these!—I will go and buy for Harriet the Whole Duty of Woman, containing the complete Art of Cookery."

But even oxygen and hydrogen are not subjects sufficiently elevated for all. Mind and matter, free will and necessity, are also fashionable topics of conversation; and you shall hear the origin of ideas ex-

plained, the nature of volition elucidated, and the extent of space and the duration of time discussed over a tea-table with admirable volubility. Nay, it is well if one of these orators does not triumphantly show you that there is nothing but misery in the world, prove that you must either limit the power of God or the goodness, and then modestly leave you to determine which. Another effect this of the general passion for distinction: the easiest way of obtaining access into literary society, and getting that kind of notoriety, is by professing to be a metaphysician, because of such metaphysics a man may get as much in half an hour as in his whole life.

At present the English philosophers and politicians, both male and female, are in a state of great alarm. It has been discovered that the world is over-peopled, and that it always must be so, from an erro in the constitution of nature; that the law which says "Increase and multiply," wa

given without sufficient consideration; in short, that He who made the world does not know how to manage it properly, and therefore there are serious thoughts of requesting the English Parliament to take the business out of his hands.

LETTER LXXII.

Westminster Abbey on Fire.—Frequency of Fires in England.—Means devised for preventing and for extinguishing them; but not in Use.

I WAS fortunate enough this morning to witness a very grand and extraordinary sight. As D. and I were walking towards the west end of the town, we met an acquaintance who told us that Westminster Abbey was on fire. We lost no time in going to the spot; the roof was just smoking sufficiently to show us that the intelligence was true, but that the building was no longer in danger.

The crowd which had collected was by no means so great as we had expected.—Soldiers were placed at the doors to keep

out idle intruders, and admit such only as might properly be admitted. The sight when we entered was truly striking. Engines were playing in the church, and the long leathern pipes which conveyed the water stretched along the pavement. The roof at the joint of the cross, immediately over the choir, had fallen in, and the huge timbers lay black and smoking, in heaps, upon the pews which they had crushed. A pulpit, of fine workmanship, stood close by unhurt. Smaller fragments, and sparks of fire, were from time to time falling down; and the water which was still spouted up in streams, fell in showers, and hissed upon the hot ruins below. We soon perceived that no real injury was done to the church, though considerable damage was inflicted upon the funds of the chapter.—The part which was thus consumed had not been finished like the rest of the building; instead of masonry, it had been from some paltry motives of parsimony made of wood, and lined on the inside with painted

canvas, in a miserable style. All this patchwork was now destroyed, as it deserved to be; and the light coming in from above, slanted on the fretted roof, the arches and pillars, which stood unhurt and perfectly secure.

The Westminster boys were working an engine in the cloisters with hearty good-will. D., who had been educated at Westminster himself, said they were glad at the fire; indeed, he confessed that he did not himself look without satisfaction upon the ruins of the pew, where he had formerly been compelled to sit so many hours in the cold.

The pavement in that part of the abbey which is called Poet's Corner sunk considerably in consequence of the water, the earth in the graves probably sinking when wet: so much so that the stones must be taken up and laid anew. What an opportunity of examining the skulls of so many celebrated men! If professor Blumenbach were but an Englishman, or if the dean

and chapter were physiologists, these relics would now be collected and preserved.

One of the graves would exhibit curious contents, if any such curiosity should be indulged. An old countess, who died not long since after a very singular life, gave orders in her will that she should be buried in Poets' Corner, as near as possible to Shakspeare's monument, dressed in her wedding suit, and with a speaking trumpet in her coffin. These orders her executors were obliged to perform to the letter. Accordingly, a grave was solicited and granted for a due consideration in this holy ground; the old lady was equipped in her bridal array, packed up for the journey, and ready to set off, when it was discovered that the speaking trumpet had been forgotten. What was to be done? This was in a remote part of the country; there was not such a thing to be purchased within a dozen leagues, and the will was not to be trifled with. Luckily some person there present recollected that a gentleman

in the neighbourhood had a speaking-trumpet, which had been left him by a sea-captain as a memorial of an old friend, and which for that reason he particularly valued. A messenger was immediately dispatched to borrow this; of course he was careful not to say for what it was wanted: as soon as it was brought, it was put by her side in the coffin, the coffin was soldered down, off posted the funeral for London, and if the rightful owner does not look after his trumpet now, he will have no other opportunity till he hears the old lady flourish upon it at the resurrection, for which purpose it is to be presumed, she chose to have it at hand.

This mischief, which might have been in its consequences so deplorable, was occasioned by the carelessness of some plumbers, who were at work upon the roof. Old St Paul's was destroyed just in this way: it is surprising how many accidents of this kind have happened from the same cause, and provoking to think,

that so great and venerable a work of piety and human genius, and human power, should have been so near destruction by the stupid negligence of a common labourer! They burn in the hand for accidental homicide in this country;* a little application of hot iron for accidental church-burning would be a punishment in kind for a neglect of duty, so dangerous, that it ought not to be unpunished. When carelessness endangers the life or welfare of another, it ought to be regarded as a crime.

A fire is the only ordinary spectacle in this great metropolis which I have not seen; for this cannot be called such, though in its effect finer than any conflagration.—Fires are so frequently happening, that I may consider myself as unfortunate. The traveller who is at London without seeing a fire, and at Naples without witnessing an eruption of Vesuvius, is out of luck.

* Don Manuel confounds homicide and manslaughter.—TR.

The danger of fire is one to which the Londoners are more exposed than any people in the world, except, perhaps, the inhabitants of Constantinople. Their earth-coal must be considered as one main cause —pieces of this are frequently exploded into the room. The carelessness of servants is another; for nothing but candles are used to give light for domestic purposes, and accidents happen from a candle which could not from a lamp. The accumulation of furniture in an English house is so much fuel in readiness; all the floors are boarded, all the bedsteads are of wood, all the beds have curtains. I have heard of a gentleman who set the tail of his shirt on fire as he was stepping into bed, the flames caught the curtains, and the house was consumed. You may easily suppose this adventure obtained for him the name of The Comet.

Means have been devised for preventing fires, for extinguishing them, and for escaping from them. David Hartley, son

to a great English philosopher of the same name, proposed to line every room with plates of metal, and Lord Stanhope invented a kind of mortar for the same purpose. Both methods have been tried with complete success; but they will never be adopted unless a law be passed to compel the adoption. For houses in London, and indeed in all large towns, are built for sale, and the builder will not incur the expense of making them fire-proof, because, if they are burnt, he is not the person who is to be burnt in them. And if he who builds for himself in the country, were disposed to avail himself of these inventions, should he have heard of them, the difficulty of instructing labourers in the use of any thing which they have not been used to, is such, that rather than attempt it, he submits to the same hazard as his neighbours.

You would suppose, however, that there could be no objection to the use of any

means for extinguishing fires. Balls for this purpose were invented by Mr Godfrey, son to the inventor of a famous quack-medicine; but the son's fire-balls did not succeed so well as the father's cordial.—Succeed, indeed, they did, in effecting what was intended; for, when one of them was thrown into a room which had been filled with combustibles and set on fire for the purpose of experiment, it exploded, and instantly quenched it. But there was an objection to the use of these balls which Mr Godfrey had not foreseen. It is a trade in England to put out fires, and the English have a proverb that "All trades must live;" which is so thoroughly admitted by all ranks and degrees, that if the elixir of life were actually to be discovered, the furnishers of funerals would present a petition to parliament, praying that it might be prohibited, in consideration of the injury they must otherwise sustain; and in all

probability, parliament would permit their plea. The continuance of the slave trade, in consideration of the injury which the dealers in human flesh would sustain by its abolishment, would be a precedent. The firemen made a conspiracy against Godfrey; and when he or any of his friends attended at a fire, and mounted a ladder to throw the balls in, the ladder was always thrown down; so that, as the life of every person who attempted to use them was thus endangered, the thing was given up.

The machine for escaping is a sort of iron basket, or chair, fixed in a groove on the outside of the house. I have never seen one at any other place than at the inventor's warehouse. The poet, Gray, was notoriously fearful of fire, and kept a ladder of ropes in his bed-room. Some mischievous young men at Cambridge knew this, and roused him from below, in the middle of a dark night, with the cry of Fire! The staircase, they said,

was in flames. Up went his window, and down he came by his rope-ladder, as fast as he could go, into a tub of water which they had placed to receive him.

LETTER LXXIII.

Remarks on the English Language.

He who ventures to criticise a foreign language should bear in mind that he is in danger of exposing his own ignorance. "What a vile language is yours!" said a Frenchman to an Englishman;—"you have the same word for three different things! There is ship, *un vaisseau;* ship (sheep) *mouton;* and ship (cheap) *bon marché.*"—Now these three words, so happily instanced by Monsieur, are pronounced as differently as they are spelt. As I see his folly, it will be less excusable should I commit the same myself.

The English is rather a hissing than a harsh language, and perhaps this was the

characteristic to which Charles V. alluded, when he said it was fit to speak to birds in. It has no gutturals like ours, no nasal twang like the Portugueze and French; but the perpetual sibilance is very grating. If the Rabbis have not discovered in what language the Serpent tempted Eve, they need not look beyond the English; it has the true mark of his enunciation. I think this characteristic of the language may be accounted for by the character of the nation. They are an active busy people, who like to get through what they are about with the least possible delay, and if two syllables can be shortened into one it is so much time saved. What we do with *Vmd.* they have done with half the words in their language. They have squeezed the vowel out of their genitives and plurals, and compressed dissyllables into monosyllables. The French do the same kind of thing in a worse way; they in speaking leave half of every word behind them in a hurry; the English pack

up theirs close, and hasten on with the whole.

It is a concise language, though the grievous want of inflections necessitates a perpetual use of auxiliaries. It would be difficult to fill eight lines of English, adhering closely to the sense, with the translation of an octave stanza. Their words are shorter; and though in many cases they must use two and sometimes three, where we need but one, still if the same meaning requires more words, it is contained in fewer syllables, and costs less breath. Weight for weight, a pound of *garvanzos** will lie in half the compass of a pound of chesnuts.

Frenchmen always pronounce English ill; Germans, better; it is easier for a Spaniard than for either. The *th*, or theta, is their shibboleth; our *z* has so nearly the same sound that we find little or no difficulty in acquiring it. In fact,

* A species of lupin used as food.—TR.

the pronunciation would not be difficult if it were not capricious; but the exceptions to any general rule are so numerous, that years and years of practice are hardly sufficient to acquire them. Neither is the pronunciation of the same word alike at all times, for it sometimes becomes the fashion to change the accent. The theatre gives the law in these cases. What can have been the cause of this preposterous and troublesome irregularity is beyond my knowledge. They acknowledge the defect, and many schemes have been devised by speculative writers for improving the orthography, and assimilating it to the oral tongue: but they have all so disfigured the appearance of the language, and so destroyed all visible traces of etymology, that they have only excited ridicule, and have deserved nothing better.

It is difficult to acquire, yet far less so than the German and its nearer dialects; the syntax is less involved, and the proportion of Latin words far greater. Dr John-

son, their lexicographer, and the most famous of all their late writers, introduced a great number of sesquipedalian Latinisms, like our Latinists of the seventeenth century. The ladies complain of this, and certainly it was done in a false taste,—but it facilitates a foreigner's progress. I find Johnson for this very reason the easiest English author; his long words are always good stepping-stones, on which I get sure footing.

If the size of his dictionary, which is the best and largest, may be regarded as a criterion, the language is not copious. We must not however forget that dictionaries profess to give only the written language, and that hundreds and thousands of words, either preserved by the peasantry in remote districts, or created by the daily wants and improvements of society, by ignorance or ingenuity, by whim or by wit, never find their way into books, though they become sterling currency. But that it is not copious may be proved

by a few general remarks. The verb and substantive are often the same; they have few diminutives and no augmentatives; and their derivatives are few. You know how many we have from *agua;* the English have only one from *water*, which is the adjective *watery;* and to express the meaning of ours, they either use the simple verb in different senses, or form some composite in the clumsy Dutch way of sticking two words together; *agua,* water; *aguaza,* water; *aguar,* to water; *hazer aguada,* to water; *aguadero,* a water-man; *aguaducho,* a water-pipe; *aguado,* a water-drinker, &c. &c. And yet, notwithstanding these deficiencies, they tell me it is truly a rich language. Corinthian brass would not be an unapt emblem for it,—materials base and precious melted down into a compound still precious, though debased.

They have one name for an animal in English, and another for its flesh;—for instance, cow-flesh is called beef; that of the sheep, mutton; that of the pig, pork.

The first is of Saxon, the latter of French origin; and this seems to prove that meat cannot have been the food of the poor in former times. The cookery books retain a technical language from the days when carving was a science, and instruct the reader to *cut up* a turkey, to *rear* a goose, to *wing* a partridge, to *thigh* a woodcock, to *unbrace* a duck, to *unlace* a rabbit, to *allay* a pheasant, to *display* a crane, to *dismember* a hern, and to *lift* a swan.

Their early writers are intelligible to none but the learned, whereas a child can understand the language of the Partidas, though a century anterior to the oldest English work. This late improvement is easily explained by their history: they were a conquered people: the languages of the lord and the subject were different; and it was some ages before that of the people was introduced at court, and into the law proceedings, and that not till it had become so amalgamated with the Norman French, as in fact to be no longer Saxon.

We, on the contrary, though we lost the greater part of our country, never lost our liberty—nor our mother tongue. What Arabic we have we took from our slaves, not our masters.

I can discover, but not discriminate, provincial intonations, and sometimes provincial accentuation; but the peculiar words, or phrases, or modes of speech which characterize the different parts of the country, a foreigner cannot perceive. The only written dialect is the Scotch. It differs far more from English than Portugueze from Castilian, nearly as much as the Catalan, though the articles and auxiliars are the same. Very many words are radically different, still more so differently pronounced as to retain no distinguishable similarity; and as this difference is not systematic, it is the more difficult to acquire. No Englishman reads Scotch with fluency, unless he has long resided in the country—I have looked into the poems of Burns, which are very famous, and found them

almost wholly unintelligible; a new dictionary and new grammar were wanted, and on enquiring for such I found that none were in existence.

The English had no good prose writers till the commencement of the last century, indeed with a very few exceptions till the present reign; but no book now can meet with any success unless it be written in a good style. Their rhymed poetry is less sonorous, less euphonous, less varied, than ours; their blank verse, on the other hand, infinitely more rhythmical than the *verso suelto*. But their language is incapable of any thing between the two; they have no *asonantes*, nor would the English ear be delicate enough to feel them. In printing poetry they always begin the line with a capital letter, whether the sentence requires it or not: this, which is the custom with all nations except our own, though at the expense of all propriety, certainly gives a sort of architectural uniformity to the page. No mark of interrogation or ad-

miration is ever prefixed; this they might advantageously borrow from us. A remarkable peculiarity is, that they always write the personal pronoun I with a capital letter. May we not consider this great I as an unintended proof how much an Englishman thinks of his own consequence?

LETTER LXXIV.

Departure from London.—West Kennet.—Use of the Words Horse and Dog.—Bath.—Ralph Allen.—The Parades.—Beau Nash.—Turnspits.

Sept. 16.

THE last day of my abode in London was the most painful of my life. To part from dear friends, even for a transitory absence, is among the evils of life; but to leave them with a certainty of never meeting again, was a grief which I had never till now endured. Sixteen months had I been domesticated with J., as if I had been a brother of the family. When the children, as they went to bed last night, came to kiss me for the last time, I wished I had never seen them, and all night I remained wake-

ful—not in that state of feverish startlishness which the expectation of an early call occasions, but in melancholy thoughts and unavailing regret, which all the recollections of my own country, and my father's house, could not dissipate. Never shall I remember my friends in England without gratitude and love.

The coach was to start at five. I was ready at four, expecting the porter from the inn. To my surprise, rather than satisfaction, Mrs J. and her husband had risen, and prepared chocolate for me. The preparations for a departure are always mournful: even animals know and dislike them: the dog is uneasy when he sees you packing up, and the cat wanders disturbedly from room to room, aware that some change is preparing, and dreading all change. The smell of cords and matting becomes associated with unsettled and uneasy feelings;—you rise by candle-light;—every thing is unusual, unnatural, enough to depress even joyful hope—and my de-

parture was for ever. Mrs J. said, she trusted we should meet again in a better world, if not in this:—"Heretic as I am," said she, striving to force a smile through her tears, "I am sure you will join in the hope." Excellent woman—it cannot be heresy to believe it.

For the first time I was now to travel alone in this country: at Bristol, however, D. was to meet me, and this was a consolation, and a pleasure in store. We breakfasted at Maidenhead, and then entered upon a road which was new to me, through a level country, with easy hills on either side in the distance, full of villages and villas: this was its character for fifteen leagues. We passed through Reading, a town of consequence in old times, and still flourishing. Speenhamland was the next stage, a street connected with the town of Newbury.

On an eminence to the right of the town stand the remains of Donnington castle, built by Geoffrey Chaucer, the father of

English poetry, who was contemporary with king Don Juan I. We passed through Hungerford, and through Marlborough forest, the only one which I have seen in England; then came to the town of the same name, an old place, in which many of the houses are faced with tiles in the shape of fish-scales. At the end of the town is one of the largest inns in the kingdom, the house having formerly been a duke's palace, with an artificial mound of remarkable size in the garden.

There is something as peculiar as it is pleasing in the character of this country: the villages, with their churches, are all seated in the bottom, which is intersected by numberless little streams, in every respect unlike the mountain rivers of the north, but still beautiful; they flow slowly over weedy beds, sometimes through banks of oziers, sometimes through green fields. Beyond, and on both hands, lie the Downs, and patches of brown stubble show the advance of cultivation up their sides; for,

wherever there are neither hedges nor trees, it is a certain mark that the land has not long been cultured. The soil is chalky. The stage stopped at a little, clean, low ale-house, and the coachman opened the door and asked if we would please to alight. "By all means," said one of my fellow-travellers; and then, addressing himself to me, he said, "If you have ever travelled this road before, sir, you will alight of course; and if you have not, you must not pass by without tasting the best beer in England." When I had done so, I fairly confessed to him that if I had left England without tasting it, I should not have known what beer was. The good woman was so well pleased with this praise from a foreigner, that she invited me to walk into the cellar, and, in a room on the same floor with the kitchen into which we were introduced, (there being no other apartment for us,) she showed me *fifty* barrels of beer, that quantity being always kept full. I wrote down the name of the

village, which is West Kennet, in my tablets, that I might mention it with due honour; and also, that if ever I should graduate in art magic in the caves of Salamanca, I might give the imp in attendance a right direction where to go fill my glass every day at dinner.

Near this village, and close by the road side, is the largest tumulus in the island. As we crossed the Downs, we saw on our left the figure of a huge white horse cut in the side of the chalk hill, so large, and in such a situation, that in a clear day it is visible above four leagues off. There are other such in different parts of the country, and all are regularly weeded on a holiday appointed in each parish for the purpose. It is perhaps a relic of Saxon superstition. I may here notice a remarkable use which the English make of the word *horse*. They employ it in combination to signify any thing large and coarse, as in horse-beans, horse-chesnut, horse-radish;—sometimes it is prefixed to a man's name as an epithet

of ridicule: they say also horse-ant, and horse-leech: and, by a still stronger compound, I have heard a woman of masculine appearance called a horse godmother.* Dog is used still more strangely in almost every possible sense: the wild rose is called dog-rose; the scentless violet, dog-violet. Jolly dog is the highest convivial encomium which a man can receive from his companions; honest dog is when he superadds some good qualities to conviviality; sad dog is when he is a reprobate: dog is the word of endearment which an Englishman uses to his child, and it is what he calls his servant when he is angry: puppy is the term of contempt for a coxcomb; and bitch the worst appellation which can be applied to the worst of wo-

* *Cavallo-comadre.* The meaning of the words cannot be mistaken, but the expression is not known to the translator: neither does he know that men are called horses in England as well as asses, unless, indeed, that a man with a long face is said to be like a horse.—Tr.

men. A flatterer is called a spaniel, a ruffian is called a bull-dog, an ill-looking fellow an ugly hound; whelp, cur, and mongrel, are terms of contemptuous reproach to a young man; and if a young woman's nose turns upward, she is certainly called pug.

Having passed through the towns of Calne and Chippenham, the light failed us, and thus deprived me of the sight, as I was told, of a beautiful country. About nine we entered Bath. My fellow-travellers all left me, and I was landed at a good inn, for the first time without a companion, and never more in need of one. I have been writing with a heavy heart, lest my heart should be heavier, were I unemployed. Wherever we go we leave something behind us to regret, and these causes of sorrow are continually arising. Even the best blessings of life are alloyed by some feeling of separation: the bride leaves her father's house, when she goes to her husband's; and the anxieties of in-

fancy are hardly overpast, when the child goes from his mother to commence his career of labour and of pain. It is assuredly delightful to have travelled, but not to travel:—Oh, no! Fatigue, and the sense of restlessness, are not all that is to be endured;—the feeling that you are a stranger and alone comes upon you in a gloomy day, when the spirits fall with the barometer, or when they are exhausted at evening or at night. We paint angels with wings, and fancy that it will be part of our privileges in heaven to move from place to place with accelerated speed. It would be more reasonable to suppose that Satan keeps stage-coaches, and has packets upon the Styx; that locomotion ceases when we become perfect, and beatified man either strikes root like a zoophyte, or is identified with his house like a tortoise.

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Sept. 17. Bath.

If other cities are interesting as being

old, Bath is not less so for being new. It has no aqueduct, no palaces, no gates, castle, or city walls, yet it is the finest and most striking town that I have ever seen.

According to the fabulous History of England, the virtues of the hot springs here were discovered long before the Christian æra, by Bladud, a British prince, who, having been driven from his father's house because he was leprous, was reduced like the Prodigal Son to keep swine. His pigs, says the story, had the same disease as himself: in their wanderings they came to this valley, and rolled in the warm mud where these waters stagnated;—they were healed by them. Bladud, perceiving their cure, tried the same remedy with the same success, and when he became king he built a city upon the spot. It is certain that the Romans were acquainted with these springs, and had a station here; and it must have been a place of some consequence some centuries ago when the cathedral was built, yet not of much, or the diocese

would not, at the time of the schism, have been united under one bishop with that of Wells. Within the memory of old persons, Bath consisted of a few narrow streets in the bottom:—invalids came at that time for the benefit of its waters; and wherever there are such places of resort, many, who have no real complaints, will either fancy or feign them, for the sake of going there to meet company. As the wealth of the country increased, and habits of dissipation with it, these visitors became more numerous, and accommodations were wanting for them.

Close to the town, between the springs and the river, was a morass. The ground belonged to Ralph Allen, the Allworthy in Tom Jones, one of the few English works which we have naturalized in our language. This excellent man was of low parentage, and had in his youth been employed in carrying letters from a post town across the country, for there was at that time no regular communication from one

town to another, except along the direct road to London. During these solitary journeys the thought occurred to him that it would be far better that such a communication should be regularly established by the state, than that it should be left to poor individuals like himself, who were neither always to be found, nor always to be trusted: accordingly, he shaped a plan for this purpose; government adopted it; and, in consequence, his fortune was made. He fixed his residence on a hill about half an hour's walk from Bath, and, carrying with him into retirement the same active mind which had been the means of his advancement from obscurity, willingly listened to any plan which could be devised for the improvement of the city. There was then in the city an architect of real genius, by name Wood; and upon this morass of Mr Allen's he erected two rows of houses, one fronting the north, the other the south; connected them by two transverse streets, of which the houses were built

upon the same plan; and left in front a magnificent paved terrace, about thirty paces in breadth, raised upon arches, and open to the country. The houses were designed for lodgers; they are large and lofty, and are certainly the finest range of private buildings in the whole kingdom, and, perhaps, in the whole world.

About the same time a townsman, who had amassed some fortune in trade, built a theatre just of that size in which the voice could be heard in all parts of the house without being strained, and the movements of the countenance seen without being distorted. While the town was thus improved by the enterprising liberality of its inhabitants, it derived no less advantage from the humour of one of those men who are contented to exhibit strong sense, in playing the fool well all the days of their lives. By this time more persons visited Bath in search of pleasure than of health, and these persons, among other amusements, had their public dances.—Now,

though Englishmen have proved that they can go on peaceably, orderly, and well, under a free government, it was found utterly impossible to keep English women in order by any thing short of an absolute monarchy. Precedency, in these public meetings, was furiously contested,—because, in most instances, there was no criterion of rank whereby it could be decided; and points which are most doubtful, and, it may be added, most insignificant, are oftentimes the most warmly disputed: a perpetual Dictator for the realm of Fashion was necessary, and this person was the second who held the office. Nash was his name, and his fitness for the office is attested by the title of Beau, which is always prefixed to it;—Charlemagne, the Venerable Bede, and Beau Nash, being the only three persons whose names are always accompanied with the epithets which characterize them.

Beau Nash was as great as Charlemagne in his way, and in this respect greater,

that the system which he established became permanent, and he transmitted an empire to his successors which has become yearly more and more extensive. He made laws to regulate when the company should assemble, and when they should separate; arranged the tactics of the dance; enacted the dress in which ladies should appear; and, if they ventured to disobey and come in without the wedding garment, made no scruple, whatever might be their rank, of turning them out. His strong sense and sarcastic humour kept them in awe. Such a man would in old times have been selected for the king's fool; he seems to have considered himself as standing in some such capacity to the Bath visitors, and made use of the privilege which the character allowed him. The follies of mankind were his food. He gambled, and his profits were such as enabled him to live expensively, and keep an equipage and a large retinue. This life terminated in its natural and righteous way. He became old and helpless, lived

to stand in need of that charity which he had never withheld from the needy, but which none extended to him, and died poor, neglected, and miserable; the inhabitants of Bath rewarding his genius after the usual manner in which genius of a higher character is rewarded, by erecting a statue to the honour of the man whom they had suffered almost to starve.

Once, after his death, his loss was exemplified in a very remarkable manner. Two ladies of quality quarrelled in the ball-room. The rest of the company took part, some on one side, some on the other; Beau Nash was gone, and they stood in no awe of his successor: they became outrageous, a real battle-royal took place, and the floor was strewn with caps, lappets, curls and cushions, diamond pins and pearls.

Since the Parades were built every addition to the town has been made upon system, and with a view to its beauty: hence it presents the singular spectacle of a city of which the parts are uniform, yet the

whole irregular;—a few old streets still remaining to make the others more remarkable by contrast. The adjoining hills supply a soft freestone, which is easily worked, and becomes harder when exposed to the air: its colour is very beautiful when fresh, but it is soon blackened by the soot from the earth-coal fires, which is indeed exceedingly annoying in all the large towns. Still, blackened stones produce a far better effect than blackened bricks. There is a Square of which the sides resemble so many palaces; ascend a handsome street from this, and you come into a Circus of like beauty, and near this is a Crescent built with equal, or even more magnificence, and overlooking the country. There are three of these crescents on the hills; one of them remains unfinished, because the ground in front has not been well secured, but in situation it is the finest of the three. A fourth in the valley remains one of the melancholy new ruins, which the projectors were unable

to complete, and so were ruined themselves, a sudden check having been given to all such speculations when the last war broke out. It is plain that Bath has outgrown its beauty. Long suburbs extend now on every side of the city, and the meads on the opposite side of the river, which, when the Parades were built, justified the motto upon one of the houses, *Rus in Urbe,* are now covered with another town. It must have been in its perfection when there was nothing beyond the new bridge nor above the old Crescent.

I passed the whole morning in perambulating the town, seeing it in all its parts. The cathedral is small but beautiful; it has suffered much from the fanatics. The Pump-room is a handsome building, and bears above the entrance the words of Pindar, Αριστον μεν ὑδωρ, here used in a sense concerning which there can be no dispute. I found my way into the market, which for its excellent order and abundance sur-

passes any thing in London, and is as surprising a sight as any in the place. There being in some places no carriage road, and in others so wide a pavement that in wet weather there would be no getting at the carriage, sedan chairs are used instead. They are very numerous, and with the chairmen, who all wear large coats of dark blue, form another distinguishing peculiarity of this remarkable town. There are two public ball-rooms, and two masters of the ceremonies, Beau Nash's empire having been divided, because it was grown too large for the superintendance of any individual: these rooms are handsome, and lighted with splendid chandeliers of cut glass, but they want that light ornamental festive character which southern taste would have given them. Some sober Englishmen in the anti-chambers were silently busied at whist, though it was noonday,—some of them, it seems, make it the study of their lives, and others their trade. It is a fine place for gamblers, and for that

species of men called fortune-hunters, a race of swindlers of the worst kind, who are happily unknown in Spain. They make it their business to get a wife of fortune, having none themselves: age, ugliness, and even idiocy, being no objections. They usually come from Ireland, and behave as ill to the women whom they have trepanned, after marriage, as the women deserve for trusting them. It is also the Canaan of Physicians; for it abounds with wealthy patients, many of whom will have any disease which the doctor will be pleased to find out for them: but even Canaan may be overstocked, and, it seems, more of Death's advanced guard have assembled here than can find milk and honey.

The enormous joints of meat which come to an English table are always roasted upon a spit as long as the old two-handed sword;* these spits are now turned by a wheel in the chimney which the smoke

* Estoque.

sets in motion, but formerly by the labour of a dog who was trained to run in a wheel. There was a peculiar breed for the purpose, called turnspits from their occupation, long-backed and short-legged; they are now nearly extinct. The mode of teaching them their business was more summary than humane: the dog was put in the wheel, and a burning coal with him; he could not stop without burning his legs, and so was kept upon the full gallop. These dogs were by no means fond of their profession; it was indeed hard work to run in a wheel for two or three hours, turning a piece of meat which was twice their own weight. Some years ago a party of young men at Bath hired the chairmen on a Saturday night to steal all the turnspits in town, and lock them up till the following evening. Accordingly on Sunday, when every body has roast meat for dinner, all the cooks were to be seen in the streets,— "Pray have you seen our Chloe?" says one. "Why," replies the other, "I was

coming to ask you if you had seen our Pompey:" up came a third, while they were talking, to enquire for her Toby,— and there was no roast meat in Bath that day.

It is told of these dogs in this city, that one Sunday, when they had as usual followed their mistresses to church, the lesson for the day happened to be that chapter in Ezekiel, wherein the self-moving chariots are described. When first the word wheel was pronounced, all the curs pricked up their ears in alarm; at the second wheel they set up a doleful howl; and when the dreaded word was uttered a third time, every one of them scampered out of church as fast as he could, with his tail between his legs.

LETTER LXXV.

Road from Bath to Bristol.—Cornu Ammonis. — Bristol. — Exchange. — Market.—Cathedral.—The Brazen Eagle.—Clifton. — Bristol-Wells. — Anecdote of Kosciusko.

From Bath to Bristol is three leagues; the road crosses the river Avon by an old bridge, and continues for some way along its banks, or at little distance from them. Half a league from Bath is the house wherein Fielding is said to have written Tom Jones; it stands by the way side, in a village called Twyverton, and I did not look at it without respect. We had a fine view of the river winding under a hill which is covered with old trees, and has a mansion on its brow, opposite to which, on our

side the water, was the largest and finest meadow I have seen in England, in which an immense herd was feeding, as in a savannah. A little dirty town, called Keynsham, stands about half way. I noticed the Cornu-Ammonis built up in the walls of many of the houses, or, if it happened to be a fine specimen, placed over the door-way, as an ornament. This, I find, has given rise to a fabulous legend, which says that St Keyna, from whom the place takes its name, resided here in a solitary wood full of venomous serpents, and her prayers converted them into these stones, which still retain their shape. Beyond this there is a fantastic building, more like a castle than any thing else: I could neither guess for what it was intended, nor of what it was built. It proved to be the stables belonging to a great house on the opposite side of the road, from which there is a subterranean passage, and the materials were the scoria from some neighbouring iron-works, with which I soon

perceived that the walls by the road side were capt: for this it is excellently adapted, as nothing will vegetate upon it, and it is undecomposable by the weather. Here we once more approached the river, which was now a dirty stream, flowing through wide banks of mud. Bristol was presently in sight,—a huge city in the bottom, and extending up all the adjoining hills, with many steeples, one of which inclines so much from the perpendicular, that I should be sorry to live within reach of its fall,—and the black towers of many glass-houses rolling up black smoke. We entered through a gate of modern and mean architecture into a street which displayed as much filth, and as much poverty, as I have seen in any English town. Here, for the first time, I saw something like a public fountain, with a painted statue of Neptune above it, which is as little creditable to the decency of the magistrates as to the state of arts in the city. The entrance into Bristol is, however, the worst part of it.

We crossed the bridge, where there is a fine opening, and full in view a modern church and spire, so beautifully proportioned, and therefore so fine, that you do not at first perceive that the whole building is perfectly plain and unornamented.

D. was awaiting my arrival. He had secured our places for Exeter in to-morrow's coach, and I lost no time in seeing what he, as being acquainted with the place, thought most worthy to be seen. The exchange, a fine edifice, about half a century old, was opposite to the inn-door at which the stage had stopped: its inclosed square is exceedingly beautiful, more so than any thing of the kind which I have seen elsewhere:—yet, it seems, the citizens choose to assemble in the street, in front, where some friend to the city, in old times, erected four brazen tables, on which his town's-folk might count out their money in their public dealings. On one of these a man was selling newspapers, on another a cage of goldfinches was exposed to sale.

Behind the exchange is the market, which is even finer than that of Bath. It contains three market-houses, to which cheese, butter, pork, poultry, &c. are brought by women from the country. The shambles stand in another part; and another is appropriated for vegetables, secured from the weather by a range of slated sheds. I never saw, even at a fair, a busier or more crowded scene, and every thing was going on with that order and dispatch which characterize this extraordinary nation.

We crossed a wooden draw-bridge over the bed of a river, where the ships were lying on a bed of mud, and the water was not wider than a common street gutter: it was full of small craft; the view on one side extended down the river into the country: there was the bustle of business along the quays and in the streets; one church tower of singular beauty was in sight, and the whole scene was fine and remarkable. The cathedral stands in a place with old trees in front; it is a poor building,—

excepting Chester, the least interesting in England. The entrance is disfigured by a door-way in the very worst style of modern architecture. A fine cross, which formerly stood in the square, has been sold by the corporation to a gentleman, who has re-erected it at his country-seat, and thus rescued it from destruction! This was about thirty years ago; the person who told me this, said he did not remember it, but had often in his childhood eaten it in gingerbread. Instead of ascending, you descend into this church, by several steps; the pavement is therefore necessarily damp, and, what is truly abominable, stinks of the abominations which are, in contempt of all decency, committed against the doors, and find their way down.

It is, as I have elsewhere mentioned, a part of the service of the English Church to read a portion of the Scriptures, one chapter from the Old Testament, and another from the New. In common parochial churches, the whole of the service is

performed by the officiating priest, and he does this in his desk: but, in cathedrals, one of the minor priests takes this part of the duty, and performs it in the middle of the choir: here the bible is usually placed upon the outspread wings of a brazen eagle, the handsomest of all their church ornaments. Such an eagle they had in this cathedral, and a remarkably handsome one it was; but last year the dean and chapter thought proper to sell it, for the sake of applying the paltry sum which it would produce as old brass in ornaments for the altar.—So the eagle went as the cross had gone before it. There happened to be a man in the city whose humour it is to attend service whenever it is performed in this cathedral: on week days this is considered by the priests as a mere matter of form; and having few or none to attend them, they omit parts of the liturgy, and hurry over the rest, to get through their task as speedily as possible. During many years it had been the main business

of this person to watch them, and endeavour to bring them to a sense of their duty; for which purpose he wrote to them whenever he found them offending, and also to the dean and to the bishop, calling upon them to interfere, and see that the service of the church was duly performed. He missed the eagle, enquired for it, traced it to the brazier's, and rescued it from the furnace. Here was a fine subject for his zeal! He wrote a circular letter to all the bishops, of which they took no notice; offered the eagle again to the cathedral at the price which he had paid for it, which they refused, being, as might have been expected, obstinate in their misconduct—and, lastly, put it up to sale,* in the hope that it might be purchased for some other church, and not utterly desecrated. What has been its fate I know not; but it seems

* As the notice for this sale is not less curious than the occasion, I have transcribed it from the city newspaper. One of the many conveniences attending the English coffee-houses is, that the newspapers are re-

that the respect which the English pay to their cathedrals is confined to the buildings,

gularly filed in them, so that they may always be referred to:—

THE EAGLE,

FROM THE BRISTOL CATHEDRAL.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,
At the Exchange Coffee-room, in this City,
On Thursday, the 2d of September, 1802, between the hours of one and two o'clock in the afternoon,
(unless previously disposed of by private contract,)
A BEAUTIFUL
BRAZEN SPREAD EAGLE,
With a Ledge at the Tail,
Standing on a brass pedestal,
Supported by four lions, one at each corner.

This elegant piece of workmanship was sold, last June, by the dean and chapter of the cathedral church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity of Bristol, or their agents or servants, as old brass, and weighed 6 cwt. 20lb. or 692lb. and has since been purchased at an advanced price, by a native of this city, in order to prevent it being broken up, and to give the inhabitants a chance of buying it.

and does not extend to any thing in them. At one time all the monumental figures

It was given to the cathedral, in the reign of Charles II. by one of the prebendaries, who had been there 40 years; and is supposed, by the following Latin inscription, (*which was engraved* on the pillar or pedestal,) to have stood in the choir 119 years:

"Ex Dono Georgij Williamson, S. T. B. Hujus Ecclesiæ Cathedralis Bristoll: Vice-Decani, 1683."

That is,

"The Gift of George Williamson, Bachelor of Divinity, Sub-Dean of this Cathedral Church of Bristol, 1683."

The whole of the inscription, except the figures 1683, has been taken off the pedestal, without the consent of the buyer; which he has since had re-engraved.

This piece of antiquity, which is of the most exquisite shape, is made of the best and purest brass, and well worth the attention of *ministers and churchwardens*, or any gentleman or lady who would wish to make a present of it to their parish church: traders, also, to foreign parts, may find it worth their while to purchase, *as a like opportunity may never offer again.*

Such a handsome bird would be, as it has hitherto

and inscriptions were cut in brass:—a large collection of these, which were taken up from another cathedral while it was repaired, have gone the way of the eagle, and been cast into candlesticks and warming-pans.

The monuments in the church are numerous; that nearest the entrance is the finest and the most remarkable, as being Mrs Draper's, the Eliza of Sterne and of

been, a very great ornament to the middle aisle of a church. It for many years stood in the choir of the Bristol cathedral, and *upheld with its wings the Sacred Truths of the Blessed Gospel.* The minor-canons formerly read the lessons on it, and in most cathedrals the custom is kept up to this day.

This superb image is *now* at King-street Hall, and may be inspected three days previous to the day of sale.

N. B. The purchaser offered, previous to any advertisement, to re-sell the eagle at the price he paid for it, provided it were replaced in the *choir*; which offer was rejected.

THOMAS KIFT, BROKER.

the Abbé Raynal. The rhapsody about her, in the latter's work, is as excellent a specimen of every thing that is absurd, as it would be easy to find even in his Histoire Philosophique. Some parts of the architecture are beautiful in their kind. At a little distance from the church is a Saxon gateway: the upper part is in admirable preservation—the bottom has been corroded by a practice as indecent as it is sacrilegious—the more to be regretted, as this is one of the finest specimens of the style.

The views in the neighbourhood of this city are singularly pleasing. The adjoining village of Clifton was once the most beautiful village in England, and may now be said to be the finest suburb. Here too, as well as at Bath, is the dismal sight of streets and crescents which have never been finished, the most dolorous of all ruins. It stands upon a hill above the river, which runs between high rocks and a hanging wood; a scene truly magnifi-

cent, and wanting nothing but clearer water; the stream consists of liquid mud, and the banks are hideous unless the tide be full, for the tide rises here not less than forty English feet. The beauty of this scene is yearly diminishing; the rocks which formerly rose so immediately from the river side, as only to allow room for a path, are used as quarries. The people of Bristol seem to sell every thing that can be sold. They sold their cross,—by what species of weight or measurement I know not,—they sold their eagle by the pound, and here they are selling the sublime and beautiful by the boat-load! One grand crag which has been left untouched shows what mischief has already been done. There is a cavern near the summit of this, of which the arch appeared remarkably fine as we looked up to it from the side of the river.

I tasted their famous medicinal water which rises at the foot of these rocks; it is tepid, and so completely without any

medicinal flavour, as to be excellent water. In cases of diabetes it possesses some virtue; for consumption, which it is usually prescribed for, none whatsoever. Several unhappy patients, who had been sent here to die at a distance from home, were crawling out upon the parade as if to take their last gasp of sunshine. It was shocking to see them, and it is shocking to hear how thoroughly the people here regard death as a matter of trade. The same persons who keep the hotels furnish the funerals; entertain patients while they are living, and then, that they may accommodate them all through, bury them when they die. There came here a young man from the North, dying, with his sister to attend him. The disease sometimes, when it assumes its gentlest form, seems to terminate suddenly; and one morning, when the sister rose to breakfast and enquired for him, she found he was dead. He had expired during the night; the people of the house said they thought they might as well not

disturb her, so they had laid out the body, dressed it in the shroud, measured it for the coffin, and given all the orders—to take all trouble off her hands. You will think it scarcely possible that this scene of disease and death should be a place of amusement, where idlers of fashion resort to spend the summer, mingle in the pump-room and in the walks with the dying, and have their card-parties and dances within hearing of every passing bell.

Half a century ago Bristol was in size the second city in England. Manchester now holds that rank, and several other towns have outstripped it in population. There is less mercantile enterprise here than in any other trading English city: like the old Italians, the Bristol merchants go on in the track of their fathers, and, succeeding to enormous fortunes, find the regular profits so great that they have no temptation to deviate from the beaten way. The port is therefore yielding its foreign trade to bolder competitors; but it will al-

ways remain the centre of a great commerce with the Welsh coast, with Ireland, and all those inland counties which communicate with the Severn, a river navigable into the very heart of the kingdom.

There is in the streets nothing like the bustle of London, nor like the business of Liverpool on the quays. The quay, however, is still a busy as well as a striking scene, and remains a noble monument of the old citizens, who made it in the thirteenth century. On one side, the shipping, the bridges, the church-towers, and the neighbouring hill, which overlooks the town of which it now makes a part, form a fine picture; on the other, there is the cathedral with the old trees in its front, and the distant country. A third view has a wider foreground, with cranes and trees, and piles of goods intermingled, shipping of larger size, a fine row of houses upon a high terrace on the opposite side, and apart from them the church of St Mary Redcliff, which is the finest parochial

church in the kingdom, and is indeed far more beautiful than the cathedral. It is remarkable also, on this account, that it is the place wherein certain poems were said to have been found, attributed to a priest in the fifteenth century, which have occasioned as great a controversy as the Granada Relicks, and with as little reason. It is now admitted that they were the production of Chatterton, the son of the sexton of the church, who poisoned himself at the age of eighteen, and is considered by the English as the most extraordinary genius that has ever appeared among them.

A few years ago, when Kosciusko came to this city on his way to America, great marks of honour were shown him, and many presents made him, both by the municipality, and by individuals.—Among others, an honest gingerbread-baker thought, as he was going to sea, nothing could be more acceptable to him than a noble plum-cake for the voyage: he made

him the very best which could be made, and a valiant one it was. It was as big as he could carry; and on the top, which was as usual covered with a crust of sugar, was written in coloured sugar-plums—To the gallant Kosciusko. With this burthen the good man proceeded to the house of the American consul, where Kosciusko was lodged, and enquired for the general. He was told that he was lying on the sofa (for his wounds were not at that time healed,) and was too much fatigued and too unwell to see any one. "Oh!" said the gingerbread-baker, "he won't be angry at seeing me, I warrant, so show me the way up;" and pushing the servant forward, he followed him up stairs into the room. When however he saw the great man whom he was come to honour, lying on a couch, with his countenance pale, painful, and emaciated, yet full of benevolence, the sight overpowered him; he put down his cake, burst into tears like a child; and ran out of the room without speaking a single word.

Having set out on my return, a natural impatience hurries me forward; I should else regret that I have not procured letters to Bristol, and allowed myself sufficient time to see thoroughly a city which contains many interesting objects of curiosity, and of which the vicinity is so exceedingly beautiful.

LETTER LXXVI.

Journey from Bristol to Plymouth.—Advantages which the Army enjoys more than the Navy.—Sailors.—Journey to Falmouth.

We took our seats on the coach roof at five in the morning, and before we got out of the city received positive and painful proof that the streets of Bristol are worse paved than those of any other city in England. The road passes by the church of St Mary Redclift, which is indeed wonderfully fine; it is built upon broken ground, and there are steps ascending to it in several directions. I remember nothing equal to the effect which this produces. Women were filling their pitchers below it from a

fountain, the water of which passes through the cemetery!—The houses formed a continued street for nearly half a league; then the views became very striking: behind us was the city, on one side the rocks of Clifton, and as we advanced, we came in sight of the Bristol Channel. We breakfasted five leagues on the way at Cross, a little village of inns; and then entered upon the marshes, the great grazing country of these parts.

Our next stage was to Bridgewater, where we crossed the Parrot by a hideous iron bridge. This river is remarkable, because the tide, instead of rising gradually, flows in in a head,—a phænomenon of which no satisfactory explanation has yet been discovered. From hence we proceeded to Taunton through a tract of country which for its fertility and beauty is the boast of the island. "Ah, sir," said a countryman who was on the coach beside us, and heard us admiring it, "we have a saying about these western parts,

" Cornwall's as ugly as ugly can be;
Devonshire's better certainly;
But Somersetshire is the best of the three,
And Somersetshire is the country for me."

Taunton is a singularly pretty town, with a church of uncommon beauty. It was the great scene of cruelty after Monmouth's insurrection against his uncle James II., the greater number of the insurgents being of this county. One of the prisoners who was noted for being fleet of foot, was promised his life, if he would entertain Kirke the general with a display of his speed. He stripped himself naked; one end of a rope was fastened round his neck, the other round the neck of a horse, and they ran half a mile together, the horse going full speed. When the general had been sufficiently amused, and had gratified his curiosity, he sent the man to be hanged. Judge Jefferies, whose name is become proverbially infamous, went round to finish his work, and condemn all whom the soldiers had spared. The rebel peasantry

were hanged up by scores, their quarters boiled in pitch, and set up in the streets and highways. James would not perhaps so easily have lost his crown, if he had not alienated the hearts of the people by these merciless executions. Kirke escaped all other earthly punishment than that of having his name handed down from father to son for everlasting execration, by abandoning the master whom he had served so wickedly, and joining William. The judge received a part of his reward in this world; after the flight of the king, he attempted to escape in sailor's clothes, and the mob discovered him. They were prevented from pulling him to pieces upon the spot, but before he was rescued they had so handled him that he just lived to be three days in dying. Popular fury has, like lightning, more frequently struck the innocent than the guilty; but when it does strike the guilty it comes like lightning, as God's own vengeance, and leaves behind a more holy and wholesome awe, than any

legal execution, how solemn soever it be made.

After dinner we advanced a league and half to Wellington, where I saw a fine lad who had lost both legs by the frost in 1798,—a melancholy proof of the severity of the climate, even in the mildest part of England. Collumpton, a poorer and smaller town, is three leagues farther, and another stage of the same length brought me once more to Exeter.

* * * * * *

Whoever has once travelled the straight road from Exeter to Falmouth will have no inclination to travel it again. Plymouth lay about ten leagues out of the way, and it would always have been a subject of regret to me, if I had not now lengthened my journey for the sake of seeing so famous a place. The stage was full: luckily a naval officer was enquiring for a place at the same time, so we took chaise together.

Chudleigh was the first stage: about three hundred French prisoners were crowded here into a temporary prison, on their way to Bristol. We saw them looking through some wooden bars at what was passing. Ashburton the next. Devonshire is certainly a fine country, but by no means deserving of the encomiums which are passed upon it; those travellers who praise it so highly must either have come from Cornwall, or have slept through Somersetshire. Its rivers indeed are beautiful, clear, vocal, stony streams, with old bridges dangerously narrow, and angles in them, like the corners of an English mince-pie, for the foot-passenger to take shelter in. From Ashburton we reached Ivy Bridge by another easy stage: this is a very celebrated spot for its picturesque beauty, but why it should be so would be difficult to say.—A common little bridge, over a beautiful brook, which runs down a little glen, on the banks of which are town-looking houses

instead of cottages,—that kind of scene, of which, if you had never heard of it, you would just say it is pretty,—but which, if it has been previously praised, cannot but be seen with disappointment.

From hence to Plymouth was 11 miles, the latter part through a beautiful country. There are two distinct towns here, Plymouth and Plymouth Dock, connected by a causey, and both places as ugly as can well be imagined. They are so called from the river Plym, which rises in the Devonshire hills; and, as an English author says, baptizing Plymston and Plymstock by the way, empties itself here into the sea. I know not whether there be any more interesting anecdote connected with the neighbourhood than the story of a dog, who daily carried food to an old blind mastiff which lay hid in a thicket without the town, regularly on Sundays conveyed him to his master's house to dinner, and as regularly afterwards escorted him back to his covert.

I could not see the docks.—This jealousy on the part of government I could not blame, though it deprived me of some gratification. The streets are swarming with sailors. This extraordinary race of men hold the soldiers in utter contempt, which, with their characteristic force, they express by this scale of comparison,—Mess-mate before ship-mate, ship-mate before a stranger, a stranger before a dog, and a dog before a soldier.

There are however some things, as I learnt from our fellow-traveller, in which the army enjoy advantages which are not extended to the navy. Wherever the soldiers go, each regiment takes with it its paymaster; but sailors and marines are never paid any where except in England, however long they may be absent. Upon the marines this is particularly hard, as there is a practice of drafting them out of vessels which are going home into those which are to remain upon the foreign station. This is done to keep up the com-

plement, because no men are forced into this, as they are into the navy service, and no addition is made to it abroad, unless any prisoners should enter, which the Dutch soldiers frequently do. "I knew," said this officer, "a private marine who had been nine years on a foreign station, and never received one farthing of pay; and he would have been drafted again into another ship still to remain there, if the captain had not stated to the commander-in-chief that he was quite blind at night, a common disease within the tropics." This is one reason why so many men in those seas desert from the English ships to the American.

If a regiment loses its baggage, the officers are allowed a sum for it in proportion to their rank; and the allowance is so liberal, that in many instances their loss is a great gain. No such indulgence is granted in the navy, though there is more cause for it, the baggage of a navy-officer being far more valuable. The

ship is his house and home; it is not with him merely the loss of a travelling portmanteau; he has his books, his charts, his instruments, and his cabin furniture, and it would require many years of economy before these could be replaced from the savings of his pay.

In another instance the English are strangely parsimonious to their navy. Other nations supply their men of war with charts, made for the express purpose; but when an English ship is ordered abroad, it not unfrequently happens, that no good charts of the place where it is going are on board, and the master is obliged to buy such as he can find, and such as he can afford. Neither are time-pieces provided for ships of war; though few valuable merchantmen are without them.—This is strange parsimony in so enlightened a government;—assuredly it ought to provide every thing which is necessary for the ship's safety.

The organization of this tremendous

navy is a subject of great interest to other maritime powers. No person can receive a commission till he has passed six years in actual service as a midshipman, and gone through an examination before a board of officers in London; who certainly reject him, if he is not well acquainted with his duty. Of late years such prodigious glory has been obtained in the English navy, and such large fortunes rapidly accumulated, that the higher classes destine their children to this profession, which was formerly left almost wholly to the people, and have well nigh monopolized it. This is not detrimental to the service in any other way than that they are appointed to a command at too early an age. The severe education which is required, and never dispensed with, makes them necessarily understand their profession, and gives them, whatever may have been their former habits of life, the true sailor character. Hence it is that they are so infinitely superior to the army officers, who are in general ignorant of

any thing more than the common routine of the parade.

After the midshipman has passed his examination, if he has any interest, (without which nothing is now to be obtained in England,) he is made lieutenant; from this rank he may at any time be promoted to that of commander, or of post-captain, without the intermediate step. The post-captains become admirals according to seniority. This system of seniority ought to be reversed, to hold good in the inferior steps, and not above them. It should seem more equitable, and more wise, that every officer should be sure of reaching the rank of commander, because, having passed his youth in the service, the nation owes him the means of a comfortable subsistence in his age. On the other hand, admirals should be chosen from those only of distinguished ability.

Every body regrets the necessity of impressing men for the navy. I have seen

it asserted, that when Lord Keppel was at the head of the Admiralty, it was officially calculated and ascertained, that every prest man cost above 100*l.* such was the expense of press-gangs, cutters, tenders, &c. Surely, if this statement approached even to truth, the evil would have been remedied.

Voltaire has the merit of having discovered the physical cause of the superiority of the English at sea. The natives of the South of Europe navigate smooth seas,—those of the North are frozen up during winter; but the English seas are open all the year, and are navigated in long dark stormy nights, when nothing but great skill and incessant exertion can preserve the vessel. Hence arises a degree of confidence in their sailors, which is almost incredible: the greater the danger, the greater is their activity: instead of shrinking from toil, every man is at his post;—having no faith in miracles for their deliverance, they almost work miracles to de-

liver themselves, and, instead of preparing for death, strain every sinew to avoid it. Added to this confidence, they have also in war that which arises from constant success. The English sailor feels that he is master of the seas. Whatever he sees is to do him homage. He is always on the look-out, not with the fear of an enemy before his eyes, but, like a strong pirate, with the hope of gain; and when going into action, with an equal, or even a superior force, he calculates his profits as certainly as if the enemy were already taken.—"There," said the master of a frigate, when the captain did not choose to engage a superior French force, because he had a convoy in charge—"There," said he with a groan, "there's seven hundred pounds lost to me for ever."—As for fear, it is not in their nature. One of these men went to see a juggler exhibit his tricks: there happened to be a quantity of gun-powder in the apartment underneath, which took

fire and blew up the house. The sailor was thrown into a garden behind, where he fell without being hurt—He stretched his arms and legs, got up, shook himself, rubbed his eyes, and then cried out,—conceiving what had happened to be only a part of the performance, and perfectly willing to go through the whole,—"D—n the fellow, I wonder what the devil he'll do next!"

* * * * * *

A slow and uncomfortable stage-coach carried us from Tor-point, which is on the western side of Plymouth harbour, to Falmouth, through the towns of Liskeard, Lostwithiel, a pretty place with its slated roofs and its singular church tower, St Austel, and Truro. We are now at the same inn and in the same room in which I was lodged with J. on our arrival. I had then the delightful and stirring pleasure of expectation; I have now a deeper joy in the hope of soon setting foot in my own

country, and being welcomed in my father's house. But I have left dear friends whom I shall never behold again, and am departing from a land in which I have enjoyed as much happiness as man can possibly enjoy in any other state than that of domestic tranquillity.

THE END.

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